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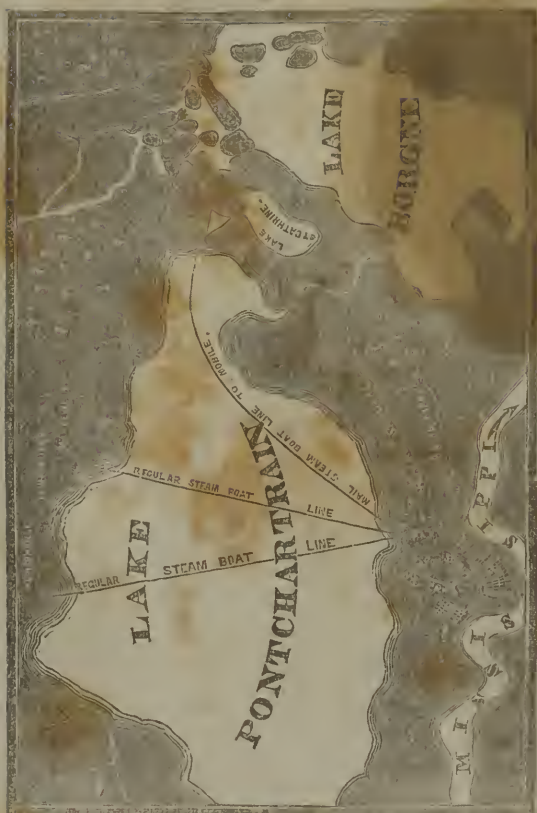
HISTORY
OF THE
YELLOW FEVER
IN
NEW ORLEANS,
DURING THE
SUMMER OF 1853.



A COMPLETE AND AUTHENTIC RECORD
OF THAT
FATAL EPIDEMIC.

BY A PHYSICIAN OF NEW ORLEANS.

PHILADELPHIA AND ST. LOUIS,
PUBLISHED BY C. W. KENWORTHY,
1854.



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DURING THE
SUMMER OF 1853.

WITH SKETCHES OF THE
SCENES OF HORROR

WHICH OCCURRED DURING THE EPIDEMIC :
DESCRIPTIONS AND BEAUTIFUL ILLUSTRATIONS OF
CHARITY HOSPITAL, AND THE PUBLIC CEMETERIES,

AND ESPECIALLY OF
POTTER'S FIELD,
AND THE METHOD OF BURYING THE DEAD IN CYPRESS SWAMP.

TO WHICH IS ADDED THE NAMES OF ALL PERSONS WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE FUNDS OF THE

HOWARD ASSOCIATION,

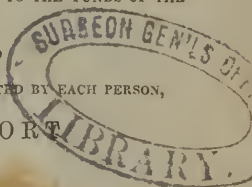
IN ALL PARTS OF THE UNITED STATES, AND THE AMOUNT CONTRIBUTED BY EACH PERSON,

WITH THE OFFICIAL REPORT

OF THE DOINGS OF THAT SOCIETY, &c.,

BY A PHYSICIAN OF NEW ORLEANS,
WHO WAS PRESENT DURING THE FATAL EPIDEMIC OF 1853.

PHILADELPHIA AND ST. LOUIS,
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CHARITY HOSPITAL, NEW ORLEANS.



HISTORY
OF THE
YELLOW FEVER IN NEW ORLEANS,
DURING THE YEAR 1853.

PESTILENCE, it has been justly observed, is one of the most awful scourges to which mankind stand exposed; and though at first sight we might reasonably suppose that there is nothing in the consumption of the human frame by loathsome disease that could interest the imagination, the course of the Plague, in various parts of the world, has been from time to time described in the most fervid strains of eloquence.

Neither War, with all its pomp, nor the Earthquake, nor the Tempest in its overwhelming fury, has been more distinctly or fearfully portrayed than the "Pestilence that walketh in Darkness," as it is vividly described in Holy Writ.

The gravest historians have vied with poets in gloomy details of its horrors, and the passages in which these are found described have ever been read by all classes of persons with intense interest.

It is not the design of the present publication to work up the subject of yellow fever in New Orleans into an eloquent or romantic narrative, but rather to give a plain and authentic account of that fatal epidemic, compiled from the most reliable sources of information, as a matter of history. The facts themselves are so full of melancholy interest, unwrought and unvarnished as we shall present them, that no art of language is needed to enchain the public attention. Without more preface or explanation, therefore, we shall proceed at once to describe the city of New Orleans, as it was in the spring of 1853, trace briefly the history

of previous attacks of yellow fever, and then give a full and minute account of the commencement, progress and effects of the great epidemic of that memorable year, with such remarks upon the nature of the disease, and the best methods of avoiding and curing it, as we think will be esteemed useful by the reader. A description of the public Cemeteries, and the peculiar methods of burying the dead in this city, will also, we believe, be read with interest; and the record of interments, and the report of the Howard Association, are matters of permanent value, without which this work would by no means be complete.

THE CITY OF NEW ORLEANS.

The city of NEW ORLEANS stands on the right bank of the Mississippi river, in ascending, about one hundred miles from its mouth. The river here makes a remarkable bend to the north-east, so that the city, although its location is on the right bank, actually occupies the north-western side of the stream. The city is generally said to lie upon the east side of the river, and so it appears upon the map; yet the stranger in New Orleans, who holds to this idea, will find that the sun will apparently rise in the west and set in the east, causing a degree of confusion in his mind which is extremely puzzling. Some persons never get the matter right at all; and after long discussions, give up the hope of unravelling the difficulty in despair. Owing to currents and eddies in the river, at New Orleans the steamers at the levee lie with the stern up the stream, just contrary to the position assumed at all other landings, which, to the mind of a stranger, not well informed on these points, adds to the confusion of his ideas. He says to himself, the city is on the east side of the river, but the sun rises across the river in the west, and sets behind the town in the east—and the river itself, judging from the position of the boats, runs up stream! The more he reflects about it, the more confused he gets—and if he chance to speak to any one, no wiser than himself, it is probable that the discussion will only increase the snarl of ideas.

The city was founded by the French, in 1718, and has been, during its history, under French, Spanish, and English government; and bears

evidence in its construction and local peculiarities, of the influence of these various nations, as well as of the native Indian population. A more mixed and varied mass of people is not to be found any where in the United States, if in the world.

With its adjacent towns and villages New Orleans occupies a space of about half a mile wide, extending along the bank of the Mississippi river for about ten miles. The remaining space, from the rear of the city to Lake Ponchartrain, (from four to five miles,) is a pestiferous swamp, generally half covered with water, filled with funereal-looking cypress trees, and peopled with alligators and hideous reptiles. A large tract of this swamp was cleared a few years ago, but it was not supposed to add to the healthfulness of the city in consequence of exposing so large a surface of vegetable matter, wet and almost incapable of being drained, to the direct rays of the sun. The great misfortune of the location is, that at most seasons the city is several feet below the common water mark of the river; and thus all drainage must be carried back from the river towards the lake, and the site of the city is so level that water will not run off unless propelled by artificial means. The water lies at all times within about a foot of the surface of the earth, so that to dig drains is only to make a stagnant ditch to hold water and green slime. If every particle of the water in these ditches should be pumped out, an hour's rain, such as is frequent in New Orleans, at all seasons, would fill them again almost to the brim.

The American portion of the city is chiefly built of brick, in good modern style; St. Charles, Camp, Canal, and Carondelet streets have very much the aspect of New York. In the French district, however, the city has quite a foreign and peculiar air, with its low wooden dwellings and tiled roofs; and the fashionable business thoroughfares are said greatly to resemble the streets of Paris.

The city is particularly celebrated for the size and magnificence of its principal hotels; the "St. Charles," the "Verandah," the "City Hotel," and the "St. Louis," having few, if any equals in all respects, out of the city of New York. The bar-room of the "St. Louis" rivals the celebrated Rotunda of the Capitol at Washington, in size and style of architecture.

The Theatres are also of a superior character; the public Halls, in which balls and concerts are given, are all upon a grand scale; and nowhere in the United States is there more of life and fashionable display than in New Orleans during the business season. The view of New Or-

leans, from the river, is beautiful and imposing—and seen from any high point it presents a panorama at once magnificent and surprising.

The population of New Orleans, as we have before remarked, has very little resemblance to that of any other city in the Union. It is made up, as B. M. Norman, in his description of the city very truly observes, of a heterogeneous mixture of almost all nations. First and foremost is the Creole population. All who are born here come under this designation, without regard to parentage or color. Thus there are French Creoles, American Creoles, Indian Creoles, and Negro Creoles. Next comes the emigrants from other States of the Union. Then the Germans, Irish, and other emigrants. Then the nondescript Watermen, or Boatmen, some ten thousand or more, who have few, if any, parallels in the world. They are the children of the Mississippi, as the Arabs are of the desert, and like them are accustomed to encounter danger in every shape. The Flat Boatmen, especially, are a sort of amphibious race of beings, whose mode of living is much like that of the alligator, but who often carry under their rough exterior and uncouth manners a heart as generous and noble as beats in any human breast. The descendants of the Pilgrims are also here in great numbers. More than fifty thousand of the population are migratory; they come and go with the change of the seasons. The state of morals, notwithstanding all that has been said against it, is much better than might be expected, when the mixed and unsettled nature of the population is considered. New Orleans may, at least, compare favorably with New York in this respect, and is constantly improving. As to health, with the exception of the epidemics of 1849 and 1853, the city has not been more unhealthy than any other place of the same size in the Union. My own opinion is, that even the fatal epidemics are more to be attributed to the habits of the people than to any causes inherent in the climate or location of the city, bad as that location is.

The "Levee," or river landing, is one of the chief and most distinctive features of New Orleans. During the busy season, the Levee, for an extent of five miles, is crowded with vessels of all sizes, but more especially ships, from all parts of the world, with hundreds of immense floating castles and palaces, called steamboats; and barges and flat boats without number. No place on this continent can present a more busy, bustling scene. The loading and unloading of vessels and steamboats; the transportation, by some three or four thousand drays, of cotton, sugar, tobacco, pork, lard, hams, and goods of every description, the produce of the Great West, and the manufactures of the East; the huge piles on piles of pro-

perty of every imaginable description, heaped up on this great mart of trade; the dense crowds of people, passengers, emigrants, traders, boatmen, stevedores, and so forth; the shouts of the workmen, the clatter of thousands of tongues, in all languages; the screams of the steam-whistle, the clanging of steamboat bells; and all the varied sights and sounds of this wonderful place, present to the eye and the mind of the spectator a panorama of busy life, such as Babel alone could equal. The Levee and piers which range along the whole length of the city, extending back an average of two hundred feet, are continually covered with moving merchandize, and people of every nation, in every variety of costume, from morning till night. The Levee is from six to ten feet above the common water mark of the river; and the city is of course nearly as many feet below the high water level. This embankment, or levee, extends more than one hundred and fifty miles from New Orleans up the river. The position of New Orleans, as a vast commercial emporium, is certainly unrivalled. As the depot of the Great West, and the whole Valley of the Mississippi, and the Half-way House of foreign trade, it is almost impossible to anticipate its future magnitude.

The word "CREOLE," so much employed in Louisiana, requires a little explanation to render its meaning plain to persons living at a distance who are not familiar with it. I quote Dr. Dowler's definition of it:

"The word CREOLE, in Northern latitudes, is often misapprehended, so as to imply more or less of negro blood.

"In Spanish America, Criollos or Creoles, were, in the early days of the colonial governments, the native whites of European extraction; neither the native Indians, nor native negroes, nor mixture of the races, were so denominated.

"Towards the close of the last, and beginning of the present centuries, Drs. Mosely and Williamson, and many others, used the word Creole, as applicable, not only to the whites born in the colonies, but to negro natives also.

"CREOLE—A native of Spanish America, or of the West Indies, descended from European ancestors." (Webster's Dic.)

"CREOLE—A name given to the descendants of whites born in Mexico, South America and the West Indies; in whom the European blood has been unmixed with that of other races." (Brand's Encycl.)

"In Louisiana, every native, be his parentage what it may, is a Creole.

"Although the word CREOLE, in its usual acceptation, means a white person, it applies to all races, as Creole negroes; it even applies to the

inferior animals, and things; a Creole chicken, egg or cow, is worth nearly twice as much as one from a distant State."

YELLOW FEVER PREVIOUS TO 1853.

The first year in which yellow fever appeared as an epidemic in New Orleans, was 1796. The number of persons who died is not positively known. The population of the city at that time, did not probably exceed six thousand.

From 1796 to 1853 it is almost certain that several cases of yellow fever have occurred every year in New Orleans, often only four or five; but no year has passed without deaths from this disease in the Charity Hospital. So says Dr. Simonds, of New Orleans; and Dr. Bennet Dowler, in his latest works, assents to the truth of this declaration.

In 1799, yellow fever prevailed so extensively as to be noticed in the annals of the city twenty years afterwards.

In 1801 it spread again, causing many deaths. The year 1800 was marked by a fearful mortality from yellow fever, in Spain and the West Indies. In Havana, 9,977 died of this disease.

In 1804 the population of Spain was reduced one million by the yellow fever, many thousands leaving that country for other parts of Europe. The official reports of deaths from yellow fever amounted to 124,200 for that year!

In 1817 New Orleans suffered severely from yellow fever, from August to December. A very rigid system of quarantine had been established the previous year, with no perceptible advantage. Total mortality for five months, 1142; number of deaths from yellow fever, about 800.

The yellow fever re-appeared in New Orleans in 1818. Total number of deaths 1151; number by yellow fever not stated.

In 1819 the yellow fever was exceedingly fatal. Population of the city 45,968. The number of deaths from yellow fever is variously estimated from 3,000 to 6,000. This, however, is probably an exaggeration.

The whole mortality is estimated by Dr. Dowler at 2,190. This was a serious epidemic for a city of less than fifty thousand inhabitants.

The fever also prevailed during the year 1820, from July to December.

The Board of Health and the Quarantine establishment were both abolished in 1819, and in 1821 they were re-established, with higher powers than before, at a cost of over \$20,000.

In August, 1822, the yellow fever broke out again in New Orleans, notwithstanding the quarantine, and increased in violence till the month of October, during which month alone nearly seven hundred persons died of the disease. Rev. Timothy Flint estimates the whole number of deaths for 1822 at 2000. Dr. Dowler says the records show only 808. In the Charity Hospital alone 239 died in three months. The year 1823 was very healthy; only two cases of fever in the Charity Hospital.

On the 19th of February, 1825, the Legislature repealed the Quarantine laws, which it had enacted four years before. The Quarantine had been tried for three years, and yet two epidemics had occurred. During the eight years which followed, without Quarantine, the yellow fever diminished.

The year 1841 was a severe epidemic year; 1800 persons died. In 1843 the yellow fever prevailed; and near 700 persons perished by this awful malady. In 1847 it assumed the epidemic form, and great numbers died.

But the year 1853 presents the most awful catalogue of mortality. As Dr. Dowler very justly remarks, the bloodiest battle-fields of modern times can scarcely compare with the New Orleans epidemic of 1853, which destroyed *five times more* than the British army lost on the field of Waterloo! The shades of death have just gathered over at least eight thousand victims of yellow fever in New Orleans. *Eight thousand!* A brief enumeration,—yet what volumes of wretchedness and agony—what long annals of bereavement, of widowhood, of orphanage, of solitude, destitution and unutterable grief, are contained in those simple words!

YELLOW FEVER IN 1853.

The business season of 1853 was a remarkably prosperous one in New Orleans. Never, says a late writer on this subject, were the commercial affairs of the city in a more satisfactory condition. The winter had been unusually gay and healthy. Every branch of trade had flourished. Money was abundant. The disposal of one hundred and thirty millions of produce, which had been landed upon the levee from the teeming Valley of the Mississippi, had diffused a large sum among all classes of tradesmen and laborers. The warehouses were emptied, and the wharves and piers cleared at an earlier period than usual. Thus merchants were able to close their accounts, and finish the season in time to make a trip to the North, to Europe, or the West, leaving their clerks and warehousemen in charge of their stores. Hence the general flight which marked the approach of the summer of 1853, among all those who could afford to travel.

Besides these evidences of prosperity in New Orleans, property and stocks had advanced enormously, and capital which a few months before had avoided the city, began to pour into it, seeking safe and profitable investments.

Such were the circumstances of New Orleans in the spring of 1853. As the summer began slowly to creep upon a winter and spring of unusual mildness, hundreds of our citizens dropped off daily—hurrying to the various channels of travel northward, westward, seaward. The spring was remarkably dry. The rainy season, which usually commences in May, did not manifest itself till the last of June. Then it began to rain daily. The atmosphere was clear, cool, and apparently pure. There had been some sickness during the winter and spring, but it was chiefly of remittent fevers, which (formerly quite rare) had greatly increased of late in this locality. This was ascribed by some to the extensive clearings and partial drainage of the swamps in the rear of the city—leaving a vast expanse of moist vegetable matter exposed to the direct rays of the sun.

No one feared, or even thought of yellow fever re-visiting its old arena, after so long an absence. There had been no epidemic since 1847. Epidemic cases had indeed occurred in the Charity Hospital every summer; but the disease did not spread, and the assurance became general that this dreadful disease had abandoned New Orleans at last, as it had done Philadelphia and New York. Such was the feeling with which

thousands of our citizens started on their tours, and which reconciled those who were compelled to remain to the prospect of spending the summer in the city.

The condition of the streets, gutters and drains, always bad enough in New Orleans, was not worse, at the commencement of the epidemic, than at other times; but as the spring advanced the foul state of the city became the subject of general and bitter complaint.

The first suspected case of yellow fever, occurred in the private practice of Dr. M. M. Dowler, on the 6th of May, and terminated fatally, by black vomit, in six days. Very few persons, however, heard of this case at the time.

There is no evidence to show that the above case, or any which followed, was imported into the city, by any vessel from South America, the West Indies, or any other part of the world. The disease, beyond all question, originated in New Orleans, and was generated by causes which may generate it here or elsewhere, wherever like causes exist. These causes will be fully considered in another place.

The second case of yellow fever occurred on the 23d of May. Dr Schuppert was called on board the ship "Augusta," which lay at the foot of Josephine Street, 4th District (Lafayette), to see G—— S——, a sailor, who was seized with marked symptoms of the disease, but recovered.

The ship *Augusta* was direct from Bremen, and brought over 230 European emigrants, who enjoyed good health on the voyage, having only lost two children of diarrhoea. The vessel was out 52 days, passed on the south of Cuba, but did not approach nearer than 35 or 40 miles of that island. The emigrants arrived in good health, remained but one day in New Orleans, and then proceeded up the Mississippi. So says Dr. E. D. Fenner in his careful history of the epidemic.

The ship *Augusta* was brought up from the mouth of the river by the same tow-boat that brought up the "*Camboden Castle*," a British ship direct from Kingston, Jamaica. On the passage up the river there was free communication between the two ships across the tow boat. It is true that there was much yellow fever at Kingston, at the time the "*Camboden Castle*" was there, and seven of the crew died of the disease. But the ship was thoroughly cleansed, before she left Kingston, and there was no case of Fever on her while at sea, or after her arrival at New Orleans.

On the 25th of May, another sailor on the ship *Augusta* was attacked

with symptoms similar to the first, though more violently. He died on the 30th, in a state of delirium. Soon after death the body turned yellow. There was no bleeding before death.

On the 27th of May, two more sailors were attacked on the same ship, and with the same symptoms. One of them recovered, the other, G. Woetle, was sent to the Charity Hospital, and died on the 30th of May. He did not throw up black vomit before death. We quote from Dr. Fenner's history, who says he made the post-mortem examination. The body was yellow; and the stomach contained about two ounces of black vomit.

The next case, that of H. Bruntz, aged 21, occurred on the ship *Augusta*, May 30th. On the 4th day he was carried to the Charity Hospital, where he died on the evening of the 7th of June, with well marked evidence of yellow fever.

There were other cases on the ship *Augusta*. None of them threw up black vomit before death; but this fluid was found in the stomach, in all the cases examined, after death.

The next reported case, was that of W. K. a butcher, aged 26, who had lived in New Orleans one year; resided on Chippewa street, 4th District, (Lafayette) three squares from the river, and eleven squares above the ship *Augusta*. He had no connection with the ship that could be ascertained. Had well marked symptoms of yellow fever; but recovered under care of Dr. Schuppert.

The first case in the Charity Hospital was that of James McGuigan, an Irishman, aged 26. He was admitted into the Hospital on the 27th of May. Said he had been sick four days; and was last from Liverpool. In the course of the night he became delirious, and on the following morning, threw up black vomit freely and died about six o'clock. On examination four ounces of black vomit were found in the stomach. No one doubted that it was a genuine case of Malignant Yellow Fever.

Dr. Fenner states that James McGuigan came over in the ship "*Northampton*," from Liverpool, and had been in the city about two weeks when he was attacked. The *Northampton* brought over 314 emigrants, and arrived on the 10th of May. She passed about 50 miles to the north of Cuba. There was some sickness on board, chiefly bowel complaints, but no fever. During the stay of the ship in New Orleans there was but one case of Fever on board the ship, a boy who was seized on the 10th of June, but recovered. After leaving New Orleans, on the 14th of June, the mate was attacked with yellow fever, and died on the 18th. The Captain was also attacked, but was not very sick.

The next two cases occurred in the practice of Dr. M. M. Dowler, on "Gomby's Basin," a filthy pond situated in the upper and back part of the city. A number of streets in the 4th District, or Lafayette, are drained into this basin, and there is a canal leading from it to the Swamp in the rear. The quarter is a very filthy one, unpaved, inhabited mostly by poor people, and having in it a number of soap factories.

The first case at Gomby's Basin was that of Johannes Kaien, a German; had lived in the city about twelve months; was employed in getting shingles in the swamp, where he went to work very early in the morning, and came in late in the evening; never went to the shipping. Was taken sick on the 29th of May, and died with black vomit on the 2d of June.

Kaien's wife was attacked on the day after he died, and was buried on the eighth day afterwards.

The next case at the Charity Hospital was that of John Allen, a Scotchman, aged 24. He had resided in the city two years, with the exception of two months last summer spent on a trip to Boston. So says Dr. Fenner. Was admitted into the Hospital on the 4th of June, there sick seven days, and was discharged cured on the 12th. He had undoubted symptoms of yellow fever. He had worked on the Levee, near the ship "Camboden Castle," but had not been on board of her.

Michael Mahoney, Irish laborer, aged 16, from Liverpool, on the ship "Saxon," admitted into the Charity Hospital June 6th, then sick three days; died on the 7th; body turned yellow; large quantity of black vomit, with sediment like coffee grounds in the stomach; liver yellowish. The ship Saxon arrived at New Orleans, from Liverpool *direct*, after a long passage; brought Irish emigrants; had no other case of fever on board.

Thomas Hart, a robust young man, entered the Charity Hospital with symptoms of yellow fever on the fifth of June, then sick four days; died on the eighth. Had lived in New Orleans eighteen months; worked on the Levee, in the Fourth District; much exposed to the sun and fatigue; residence very filthy. Died in stupor.

Up to this period there was but little excitement produced by the cases of fever which had occurred. They were pronounced yellow fever by the physicians who attended them, but there was by no means a unanimity of opinion amongst all who saw them. The following case, however, put an end to all controversy. The skeptics all gave it up after seeing this. We quote Dr. Fenner.

Margaret Russell, an Irish girl, aged 22, had lived in New Orleans six months; entered Charity Hospital June 10th, (then sick six days,) and died on the 11th, after turning yellow, and throwing up large quantities of unmistakable, old-fashioned coffee grounds, black vomit. Lived one square back from the river, not far from the ship Augusta, on Tchoupitoulas street; never went to the ship or the river. Was not exposed to infection or contagion.

James Murray, an Irish laborer, aged 25, was seized with fever at a house very near the last named case, June 6th, and died on the 10th, throwing up black vomit. Arrived in New Orleans on ship Rufus Page, April 15th. Worked in a tobacco warehouse. Had been on board some ship from Liverpool, but no others.

The fever now began to make its appearance in other localities.

Mr. Timmons and his little son, aged twelve years, entered the Charity Hospital on the 16th and 17th of June. The man had been sick about three days, and the boy six. They had lived in the city three years, but had never spent a summer here. They resided on Louisa street, near St. Mary's Market. The man got well, but the boy died. Timmons had lost one or two of his children at home; and on the 25th of June his wife and last child entered the Hospital, and both died, thus leaving the poor fellow bereft of all his family by this fatal disease.

Mary Sane, an Irish woman, resided near the New Basin, entered the Charity Hospital June 21st, sick one day; died on the 24th. Had been in the city eight months.

The New Basin is the terminus of a canal that leads back to Lake Ponchartrain. It is nine squares back from the river, and three quarters of a mile below Race street, where the first cases occurred. It is not known that there was any sort of connection between the cases.

We now come to cases of fever in a new locality, and in quite a different quarter of the city. These cases occurred in Dr. George Browning's practice.

On the 21st of June, Dr. Browning was called to see a man on Old Levee street, near Esplanade, opposite the U. S. Mint. He was a German shoemaker, aged 18; had lived in the city seven months, and was sick three days when first seen by Dr. B. He died on the 24th; did not throw up black vomit, but body turned yellow after death. Had not been exposed.

A robust Irishman, in a sailor's boarding house, in the immediate vi-

cinity of the above, was attacked with fever on Saturday 25th, and died in the Charity Hospital on the 28th, with black vomit.

Cases also occurred at this time, at Algiers, a town on the opposite side of the river; and from this period onward the epidemic prevailed severely in Algiers.

The fever now broke out in another separate and distinct locality—the back part of the third District, formerly the third Municipality.

On the 28th and 29th of June, says Dr. Fenner, a family of four persons, consisting of Mary Kelly and her sister Mrs Kelly, Edward Kelly and his brother, a boy aged 15 years, were all admitted into the Charity Hospital. They all died except the boy. This family had been in the city five months, and resided on Mandeville street, third District, six squares from the river. The disease did not prevail epidemically in this region until late in July. No connection could be traced between these cases and any of the preceding.

Ten or twelve other cases of fever, similar to the above, were reported to the Medical Society on the 2d of July. The late Dr. Reynolds had eighteen cases of fever on the steamship Falcon, lying opposite Jackson Square. This ship arrived from Aspinwall on the 20th of June—no sickness on board at the time. In a few days the fever broke out among the crew. Some of them died with black vomit.

Up to the 2d of July, as appeared by the weekly reports of the Cemeteries, there had been forty-seven deaths from yellow fever. About the same number of cases had been admitted into the Charity Hospital, many of which recovered.

The localities of the cases so far, observes Dr. Fenner, circumscribe almost the entire outskirts of the city, at the same time dipping pretty far in; and as from these different points that the disease continued to spread. It was now only the first of July, and the *Epidemic* was not declared until two or three weeks later. Nothing like the gradual spread of an imported infection or contagion from one or more points to the region around can be discovered in the history of its commencement. The disease was, beyond all question, generated locally, by causes which will be considered in another part of this work.

It was currently reported that the fever was brought in by vessels from Rio Janeiro. It appears, upon careful inquiry, made by Dr. Fenner, that nearly all the vessels which arrived here from Rio, after the first of April, suffered more or less from yellow fever after leaving that port, but that none of them brought any cases to New Orleans.

The iron ship "Evangeline," from Liverpool, which was said to have brought the yellow fever, did not arrive till June 10th, after a number of less cases had occurred.

A knowledge of the facts above detailed was confined to the leading physicians of the city, and even the existence of the fever, in an epidemic form, was still denied by many eminent members of the profession.

About the middle of June it was noised abroad that there was some sickness among the shipping in the upper part of the city; but the report was hushed up, or treated as the mere fancy of some timid panic-makers, or idle gossipers. The general cry was, "hush up; don't alarm people; you will frighten them into a fever; it's all humbug; a slight sickness among sailors and poor laborers, who are much exposed to the sun, eat bad food, drink much whiskey," &c. And so it was decided to discredit the existence of the fever.

But the formidable and insidious malady could not be so easily set aside. All the while it was gradually and furtively disseminating its poison, and sowing the seeds of a rich harvest of death. The small number of citizens who took the trouble to examine into the matter, began to be alarmed; but they were frowned down as panic-makers, and the disease was still pronounced to be ship fever, which threatened only sailors and stevedores. The city was actually without a Board of Health, although the weekly reports of the Cemeteries were published under the direction of the Mayor. But even this was complained of by some, who thought it better to suppress the truth than to cause a panic. Many persons were thus ensnared, and fell victims to the epidemic, for want of correct information.

In the very first week of July the fever began to spread quite rapidly, and to create much alarm. The weather was hot and sultry, and much rain fell; the unpaved streets were very muddy, and the nights were cool. The stench arising from the foul gutters, and from decaying animal and vegetable matter in the streets, was exceedingly disagreeable. "The late rains," said the Delta, "have only stirred up the sinks. Filth, dirt, decayed cabbage stalks, dead dogs and cats, and worse, are the frequent ornaments of our thoroughfares. The nuisance is insupportable, and something must be done."

On the 2d of July, eighteen deaths from yellow fever occurred at the Charity Hospital. The physicians in the upper part of the city were very busy, while those on and near Canal street had few or no cases.

On the 6th of July, Miss Pearsall, a highly respectable and accom-

plished young lady, died of yellow fever, on Coliseum Place. The death of this young lady, justly observes Dr. Fenner, caused quite a panic, and hastened the departure of many persons who had intended to leave about this time. Mr. Pearsall, the father of the young lady, left a few days after her death, and died of the yellow fever at Natchez.

July 9th. The reports from the Cemeteries show fifty-nine deaths from yellow fever, and fifteen deaths from *other fevers*, for the week ending this day.

July 13th. The deaths from yellow fever at the Charity Hospital now amounted to fifteen or twenty a day. Most of these cases came from the region of the Water Works; a few from about the New Basin; and some from Algiers. The disease also appeared in Girod street, and was evidently approaching the heart of the city. I saw one case in St. Joseph street, at this time, with the most characteristic symptoms of the true yellow fever.

On the 15th of July, the HOWARD ASSOCIATION offered their services, by public announcement in the newspapers, to the poor and afflicted. This is an association of thirty gentlemen, organized under a charter from the Legislature, for the relief of the unfortunate "during the prevalence of Epidemics in New Orleans." An extended notice of the Association and their doings will be given in another part of this work. They were loudly complained of for issuing a public notice of their movements, by many persons who still persisted in saying that there was no Epidemic and would be none.

Four or five cases of yellow fever, at this period originated among the persons employed in the Charity Hospital.

The Fever increased very rapidly on the 17th of July; the interments for the previous week amounted to 344, of which 204 were acknowledged to be cases of yellow fever; nearly four times as many as the week previous. Nearly one half these deaths occurred at the Charity Hospital, where the mortality was very great, owing, no doubt, in a great measure to the fact that the patients entered the Hospital in a very advanced stage of the disease, yet the disease was very malignant, and did not readily yield to medicine in any of its confirmed stages.

On the 18th of July it was acknowledged that the disease had advanced into the very heart of the city. Cases occurred at the St. Charles Hotel, at the Verandah, and City Hotels—two servants died of the Fever at the Orleans Club Room, on St. Charles Street, and cases began to multiply in my own practice, and in the hands of other physicians of my acquaintance.

The flight of the wealthy classes now began in good earnest. The poor and the unfortunate who were compelled to remain, began to grow excited at the dismal prospect before them. Many, however, still denied that the disease had assumed an epidemic form, or epidemic activity, and went about their business heedless of consequences.

July 23d. The interments for the week ending this day, were 617, of which 429 were reported as yellow fever.

On the 1st of August, after repeated calls in the newspapers, for the organization of a Board of Health, the City Councils finally acted upon the matter, and a Board was organized.

The papers of August 2d, contained the first reports of the Board of Health. For the week ending July 31st, the interments were 884; yellow fever 692. The interments on the 1st of August were 142, of which 123 were from yellow fever.

The disease now began to rage in the central part of the city, in Canal Street, and its vicinity with all its horrors.

Few persons now denied that there was an Epidemic; as a very graphic writer has said, it spoke for itself.

It was figured up in the reports of the daily interments. It was proclaimed in a thousand forms of gloom, sorrow, desolation and death. Funeral processions crowded every street. Few vehicles could be seen except doctors' cabs and coaches, passing to and from the cemeteries, and hearses, often solitary, taking their way toward those gloomy destinations. The hum of trade was hushed. The levee was a desert. The streets, wont to shine with fashion and beauty, were silent. The tombs—the home of the dead—were the only places where there was life—where crowds assembled—where the incessant rumbling of carriages, the trampling of feet, the murmur of voices, and all the signs of active, stirring life could be heard and seen.

Spread over a large area, and badly built up, New Orleans did not however, bring so distinctly before the eye and mind of the observer the full extent of the ravages of the disease as other cities would have done under a like visitation. To realize the full horror and virulence of the pestilence, you must go into the crowded localities of the laboring classes, into those miserable shanties which are the disgrace of the city, where the poor emigrant class cluster together in filth, sleeping a half dozen in one room, without ventilation, and having access to filthy, wet yards, which have never been filled up, and when it rains are converted into green puddles—fit abodes for frogs, and sources of poisonous malaria

Here you will find scenes of woe, misery, and death which will haunt your memory in all time to come. Here you will see the dead and the dying, the sick and the convalescent, in one and the same bed. Here you will see the living babe sucking death from the yellow breast of its dead mother. Here father, mother, and child die in one another's arms. Here you will find whole families swept off in a few hours, so that none are left to mourn or to procure the rites of burial. Offensive odors frequently drew neighbors to such awful spectacles. Corpses would thus proclaim their existence, and enforce the observances due them.

What a terrible disease! Terrible in its insidious character, in its treachery, in the quiet, serpent like manner in which it gradually winds its folds around its victim, beguiles him by its deceptive wiles, cheats his judgment and senses, and then consigns him to grim death. Not like the plague, with its red spot, its maddening fever, its wild delirium and stupor—not like the cholera, in violent spasms and prostrating pains, is the approach of the *vomito*.

It assumes the guise of the most ordinary disease which flesh is heir to; a cold, a slight chill, a headache, a slight fever, and, after a while, pains in the back. Surely there is nothing in these! "I won't lay by for them," says the misguided victim; the poor laborer can not afford to do so. Instead of going to bed, sending for a nurse and doctor, taking a mustard-bath and a cathartic, he remains at his post until it is too late. He has reached the crisis of the disease before he is aware of its existence. The chances are thus against him. The fever mounts up rapidly, and the poison pervades his whole system. He tosses and rolls on his bed and raves in agony. Thus he continues for thirty-six hours. Then the fever breaks, gradually it passes off—joy and hope begin to dawn upon him. He is through now. "Am I not better, Doctor?" "You are doing well, but must be very quiet." Doing well! How does the Doctor know? Can he see into his stomach, and perceive there collecting the dark-brown liquid which marks the dissolution that is going on? The fever suddenly returns, but now the paroxysm is more brief. Again the patient is quiet, but not so hopeful as before. He is weak, prostrate, and bloodless, but he has no fever; his pulse is regular, sound, and healthy, and his skin moist. "He will get well," says the casual observer. The doctor shakes his head ominously. After a while, drops of blood are seen collecting about his lips. Blood comes from his gums—that is a bad sign, but such cases frequently occur. Soon he has a hiccough. That is worse than the bleeding at the gums; then follows the ejection of a dark-brown

liquid which he throws up in large quantities, and this in nine hundred and ninety-nine cases out of a thousand is the signal that the doctor's function is at an end, and the undertaker's is to commence. In a few hours the coffin will receive its tenant, and mother earth her customary tribute.

August 7th. The weekly report published by the Board of Health on this day, showed the total number of deaths for the past week to be 1188, of which 959 were from yellow fever, and many others of other type of fevers, as "pernicious," "malignant," "congestive," "intermittent," "typhus," "typhoid," &c.

On the 15th of August, the epidemic raged most awfully; public consternation and distress were indescribable.

The number of deaths for the week ending August 14th, were 1526; of which 1288 were from yellow fever.

On the 18th of August, the Mayor of the city, under the advice of the Board of Health, ordered rounds of cannon to be fired in various quarters of the city at sunset, every day, under the hope and belief that it might have some good effect upon the atmosphere, which was acknowledged by all to be fearfully impure and stagnant. Barrels of tar were also burned at nightfall all over the city, for the purpose of affecting the atmosphere, and making some favorable change in its condition.

Rain and hot sunshine were constantly alternating, almost every day; the nights were often very cool; the upper stratum of clouds never seemed to change their position; "but hung," as Dr. McFarland so strikingly said in his report to the Legislature, "like a funeral pall over the city, as if they were nailed to the sky, as long as the fever continued to rage."

A piece of fresh meat attached to a kite, and elevated a few hundred feet, came down in twenty or thirty minutes completely covered with living, moving vermiform animalculæ, and this circumstance occurred throughout the whole epidemic whenever the experiment was made, which was almost daily.

These phenomena demonstrate a horribly polluted condition of our local atmosphere, and show that *that* atmosphere was permanently established around us throughout the whole epidemic.

The firing of cannon, with the hope of disturbing the atmosphere, had no perceptible effect upon the air, but added much to the horrors of the epidemic, and was soon discontinued. As I went my evening rounds visiting my patients, and heard the booming of the cannon like a death signal falling suddenly upon the ear, the awful sound sent a thrill of

terror to my very vitals, and I could feel my heart beat quicker and my brain throb with emotion, despite all my philosophy. When the cannon were at some distance from me, and the report was only heard as a dull roar, it was extremely depressing; but when I was near the guns, the sharper sound made me start as if electrified. I could not keep out of my mind the idea that Death himself was bombarding the city, and that every discharge of his cannon sent hundreds of poor creatures to their graves, as I have no doubt was the case. I have seen patients in a state of hopeful convalescence, so excited by the firing of cannon, as to be thrown into a sudden relapse attended by high fever and black vomit, ending in stupor and death within an hour.

The burning of tar was continued much longer than the firing of cannon, but I am not aware that any benefit whatever was derived from the practice, while the murky flames, looking like beacon fires lighted over the graves of the departed, added a new horror to the dismal scenes of the epidemic, and every body rejoiced when the burning of tar was suspended.

About this period, the first or second week in August, Col. Bliss, the son-in-law of the late General Taylor, died of yellow fever at Pascagoula, on the Lake Shore. He had not been in New Orleans for seventeen days when he was attacked. He left the city on the 13th of July, and was attacked on the 30th. In the chapter on the cemeteries, will be found a further notice of Col. Bliss, and an engraving of his monument erected to his memory by his wife.

August 20th. The whole number of deaths for the week ending this day, were 1534, of which 1365 were believed to be from yellow fever, or nearly 200 per day!

The number of deaths at the Charity Hospital, for the week ending Friday August 19th, at midnight, was 272, of which 244 were of yellow fever. And this in a single Hospital.

The Board of Health had now in operation four temporary Hospitals, one in each District, or Municipality of the city.

The Mansion de Sante, formerly Dr. Stone's private Hospital, also received a great number of fever patients. This institution is under the care of the Sisters of Charity, who keep it in an admirable condition. Dr. P. C. Boyer, is the resident Physician. Among the number discharged cured from this Hospital, were fifteen cases of black vomit. All the Sisters of Charity were unacclimated. Three of them only were attacked with yellow fever; none died.

The Touro infirmary, on old Levee street, just above St. Mary's Market, received during the epidemic over 500 patients, 213 died, and 310 were discharged cured. This infirmary was established about a year ago, by the munificence of the late Judah Touro, a benevolent Hebrew, who left large legacies for the benefit of New Orleans. The resident physician is Dr. J. Bensadon.

The Howard Association established two Convalescent Infirmarys, in which were received persons just recovered from the fever, who had been discharged from the Hospitals and were yet too weak to enter upon their ordinary pursuits, a highly important and truly benevolent provision for the unfortunate poor, many of whom had no homes and no means of subsistence. Hundreds were thus saved from the danger of relapse and sudden death.

The Howard Association also opened three Orphan Asylums, in which were received 241 little children left totally destitute by the death of their parents. They also hired wet-nurses for infants, and had under their charge, at one time, nearly one hundred orphan infants at the breast. At the close of the epidemic, many of these infants were adopted by benevolent citizens, and the remaining orphans were placed in the established orphan asylum, and \$100 were given with each child to the institution which received them.

In the Asylum, Hospitals, and Infirmarys under the direction of the Howard Association, every possible attention was paid to the food, clothing, cleanliness and medical care of the patients, and members of the Association personally attended these institutions daily.

At the City Work-House, and House of Refuge, City Prison, Parish Jail and Lunatic Asylum there was comparatively little sickness, and very few deaths, although there were several hundred persons in these institutions. In the prisons of New Orleans epidemics have never produced many deaths.

The physicians of New Orleans labored night and day during the height of the epidemic, to stay the progress of the pestilence, and devoted themselves to the benevolent work of relieving the poor, with most praiseworthy zeal. When the Howard Association commenced operations, about forty physicians enrolled their names, subject to the call of the Association, for attendance upon the indigent sick. Three of these physicians fell victims to the epidemic viz : Dr. Jacobson, late of St. Louis ; Dr. Friend, late of Alabama, but originally of Petersburg, Va ; and Dr. Lucien Hensley, late of Frankfort, Ky., all most worthy, intelligent, and



FAMILY SCENE.—YELLOW FEVER IN NEW ORLEANS, 1853.

devoted men. Dr. Friend was a
 children. Many other physicians,
 book of the Howard Association,
 the Charity Hospital, without on

August 28th.—*Greatest Mort*
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 pestilence. The excitement in
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The yellow fever had long
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terminating fatally, up to Octo-*

For the week ending

| | Total. | Yellow Fever. |
|---------------------|--------|---------------|
| May 28, | 140 | 1 |
| June 4, | 142 | 1 |
| June 11, | 154 | 4 |
| June 18, | 147 | 7 |
| June 25, | 167 | 9 |
| July 2, | 177 | 25 |
| July 9, | 188 | 59 |
| July 16, | 344 | 204 |
| July 23, | 617 | 429 |
| July 30, | 723 | 555 |
| Aug. 6, | 1134 | 947 |
| Aug. 13, | 1494 | 1262 |
| Aug. 20, | 1534 | 1302 |
| Aug. 27, | 1628 | 1365 |
| Sept. 3, | 955 | 749 |
| Sept. 10, | 576 | 421 |
| Sept. 17, | 365 | 221 |
| Sept. 24, | 263 | 125 |
| Oct. 1, | 219 | 85 |
| Oct. 8, | 133 | 42 |
| Total. | 11,100 | 7,813 |

Cases in which causes of death were not stated in the
last ten weeks of this table,

Of these six-sevenths for yellow fever,

Total of deaths by the fever since May 28th

The reader will perceive some discrepancies between the above table and some of the numbers given in the preceding narrative. It is difficult to get at the precise number who died. The list of interments, the reports of the Board of Health, and of physicians, are all more or less imperfect. I have endeavored to give, as near as possible, a full but not exaggerated account of the mortality by yellow fever. Some accounts make the *total interments* for the above period *twelve thousand one hundred and fifty-one*.

October 13th. The Board of Health announced publicly that "*there is now no epidemic in the city*, and that absentees and strangers may come in with safety."

This announcement was hailed with joy by thousands, both in and out of the city, and throughout the Union; and from this time people rushed in from all quarters, and deeply affecting were many of the re-unions which I witnessed between friends who supposed, from information that

they had received, that they should meet no more on earth. A few were attacked with the disease after their arrival, but not severely, as the malignancy of the fever was much mitigated. A perceptible change had taken place in the type of the disease, as early as the 17th of September; remittent and intermittent cases becoming more numerous.

It is a very common idea respecting the yellow fever that an epidemic can only be checked by a *frost*. This is an error. In 1847 the epidemic ceased long before the appearance of frost; and in 1853 the disappearance of the epidemic was announced by the Board of Health on the 13th of October, while the first frost did not appear till the 25th, and that was only observed in a few places on the outskirts of the city.

We have mentioned that the fever of 1853 spread over a more extensive region than ever before. Along the Mississippi river it extended from the Balize up to the mouth of the Arkansas, where the village of Napoleon suffered very severely. On Red river, it went as high as Shreveport; on the Alabama river it went as high as Montgomery, the capital of the State; on the Tombigbee river as high as Demopolis. It extended to Pensacola, in Florida; to Galveston, Houston, Victoria and other places in Texas. It prevailed with fearful mortality in the village of Thibodauxville, on Bayou Lafourche, and also in some of the towns of the Attakappas, in Louisiana. The high and dry bluffs and sandy plains, and even the piney-woods suffered severely, as well as the regions of swamps and lakes.

Amidst all the awful scenes of this epidemic, one striking feature was noticed by all who were present, namely, the universal and uniform kindness and attention which was paid to the sick and afflicted, by all who were not too ill to perform such services. In the history of such fatal diseases, in other cities, and in other periods of the world, it has been justly observed by a late writer, human nature is generally represented in very repulsive and disgusting aspects. The laws of society and of nature are outraged. Fear and selfishness hold rule over the conduct of men. All the sanctities of life are trampled upon. The affections no longer control or influence the minds and conduct of men. All is confusion, terror, panic, desertion, misery, death, disorder, vice, wickedness and blasphemy. The graphic pen of Defoe has presented us with such sketches of the conduct of the people and the authorities during the Plague of London, in 1665—a less virulent and afflictive visitation than the epidemic of 1853, in New Orleans—as may not be read without shame and disgust for the selfishness and debasement of

Turn from these revolting pictures, and view the conduct of the people of New Orleans, amid the appalling terrors of the pestilence. Where in history can you find a more noble display of courage, fortitude, humanity, and true nobility of soul! View the people at the very height of the epidemic, when Death loomed out, overshadowing the whole, and obscuring all other objects. Grief, sorrow, and distress for some departed or departing friend, may be discerned in the faces of that brave population. But there is no fear, no weak cowardice, no nervous timidity, no sneaking or skulking in their expression or action. All stand to their duties, to the calls of affection, of friendship, of humanity. Business and family are forgotten; stores and dwellings are closed. The rich spend their nights by the humble cot of the sick poor, and the poor watch at the downy couch of the rich. Masters tend unceasingly their sick servants, and employers perform the most menial duties for their employees. The delicate forms of females flit, spirit-like, in every direction, to and fro—visiting their sick friends, relieving the poor, smoothing the pillow and ministering to the wants of the sick, and providing for the numerous orphans who had frequently to be taken from the bosoms of dead mothers!

Not a few of the ladies of the city, who had left to spend the summer at some of the fashionable watering places on the sea coast, returned as soon as they heard of the violence of the pestilence, to look after their unacclimated friends. Nor was this heroic devotion confined to the acclimated. The fear of contagion produced but little effect in deterring the truly charitable from performing the duties of humanity and affection on this distressing occasion. Of course there was some exceptions to these remarks. The weak, the selfish, the base and cowardly exist every where; and occasions of great peril are certain to develop these qualities as well as the noble virtues which were here so magnanimously exhibited to the world in the summer of 1853.

GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE DISEASE.

The yellow fever is a very singular disease, quite unlike all other diseases, and can only be successfully studied at the bedside of the patient. It is beyond all question a bilious fever, of a high grade, but it exhibits such varied phases that each case must form the subject of a distinct and independent investigation apart from all others. In our narrative of the epidemic of 1853, we have given a general sketch of the condition of many patients; and it is almost impossible, without really writing a long medical treatise, to give a more complete description of the disease. A few of its chief features only will be mentioned.

Sometimes the subject of the fever will be seized very suddenly, as if struck on the back of the neck by a heavy blow from some blunt instrument, and high nervous and feverish symptoms will immediately ensue. In other cases the disease will manifest, at first, only the appearance of a common cold. In some cases the fever runs high, and delirium sets in very early. In others the pulse is slow and feeble, and the patient sinks to the grave with no acute or apparently dangerous indications. It is often thus singularly insidious. The patient will have a cool and moist skin, a calm and regular pulse, quiet respiration, a clear and intelligent eye, a lively and vigorous intellect, free from all pain, the bowels will be regular, the discharge of urine free, and yet, as Dr. McFarland has justly observed in his sketch of the fever, to the experienced eye "his earthly destiny is absolutely set and sealed, and his claims to be an inhabitant of this earth as effectually closed as if the sods of the valley were already rumbling on his coffin!"

The most peculiar characteristic marks of the yellow fever, are the black discharges from the bowels, the black vomit, the yellow appearance of the eyes and skin, and the high temperature of the body for some hours after death, often rising as high as 113 degrees. These features are not, however, by any means all present in every case, nor in any large proportion of them.

The black vomit, though, considered a highly dangerous symptom, is by no means certainly fatal. A very large number of persons who throw up black vomit freely, and of the most unmistakable character, recovered in 1853. Many die in delirium and convulsions. Bleeding from the nose, gums and bowels, is exceedingly common and often fatal. The tendency to relapse, after convalescence, is also a striking feature of the disease.

The common comparison of the black vomit to "coffee grounds" probably conveys the best idea of its usual appearance. Some have compared it to broken butterfly's wings, floating in a dark colored fluid. In malignant cases it sometimes looks very black, like India ink, and at others assumes the appearance of decomposed blood. Large quantities of it are sometimes found in the stomach after death. In many cases the coats of the stomach are abraded in patches. It is beyond all question a sort of morbid hemorrhage from the stomach.

The discharge of black vomit, contrary to what might be expected, is not necessarily attended by debility of mind or body. So far from this, in not a few cases have I observed that the strength of the patient, his clearness of mind, self-possession and courage, were remarkably great, at a time, too, when every other symptom denoted approaching death. This occurs often in the last stage of the disease, and also in what have been called "walking cases," where there was little fever, in which the disease often passes suddenly from a mild to a malignant state. Some patients, a few hours before death, will even get out of bed and walk about, declaring they are perfectly well, and wish to dress themselves!

I have seen a patient in the Hospital, walking about from room to room, with a vessel under his arm to receive the black vomit, which he threw up from time to time. He continued this practise for several days, until within fifteen minutes of his death, which took place suddenly and altogether unexpectedly to the poor fellow. He always expressed the most cheerful and confident hope of recovery, notwithstanding this much dreaded symptom.

A man came into my office on a very hot day in August, and said that his friend had advised him to consult a physician, though he himself did not think there was any occasion for it. While conversing with me he asked for a basin, and threw up a large quantity of black vomit, full of the dark coffee-like sediment. He died within twenty-four hours afterwards.

Dr. Fenner, of this city, states that he saw a man lying quietly in his bed, at the Charity Hospital, *reading a book*, while the dreadful black vomit was on him. After reading a few moments he turned his head aside and ejected from his stomach, with no apparent exertion, a large mouthful of the peculiar soot-like fluid, and then resumed his story. On being carefully questioned by the physician, he seemed surprised, and inquired if the doctor thought he was "in any danger?"

In many cases, the ejection of the black matter from the stomach has

THE YELLOW FEVER

been attended by much nausea and distress, as well as vomiting; but in others no sensation of sickness, pain or nausea, has been felt. The fluid is often gulped, or spouted up, rather than vomited, without any straining or effort on the part of the patient, the whole being the result of a jerk, or slight convulsive effort, as it would almost seem of the stomach alone. I have had patients speak to me cheerfully, lean their heads over the side of the bed, throw up a mouthful, or a basin full, of black vomit, and continue the conversation as if nothing had happened. Sometimes the patient would hardly lift his head from the pillow. The stomach fills again very rapidly, and the vomiting is repeated. The fluid frequently comes up very suddenly, and is pumped, or spouted, as if from an engine, to a very considerable distance. In the Hospital I have often seen it thrown from one bed to another, and all over the clothes of the attendants.

The quantity thrown up is sometimes very great; pints, quarts, and even gallons, before death ensues, frequently a gallon in forty-eight hours. The discharges from the bowels are often very similar in appearance to the fluid thrown off from the stomach. The black vomit has not, as a general thing, any very disagreeable odor. Sometimes, however, it is extremely offensive.

In true yellow fever, the saffron-colored appearance of the eyes and skin just before or after death, and the rapid decomposition of the body, with increased heat, are marked features.

The epidemic of 1853 affected unacclimated negroes, or those who never had yellow fever before, equally as generally as it did the white population, though not so severely. This was equally true of the mixed races generally, and Indians. The native French, and Creoles of every description, were likewise affected, though not so violently as strangers, and all classes of foreigners. Second and even third attacks were not uncommon; and some even declare that they have had the yellow fever five or six times. There does not seem to be any positive exemption from the disease, except that of vital resistance to morbid influences, produced by perfection of the organization and high health.

There is, probably, as Dr. Dowler has observed in his sketches of this disease, no violent acute malady less painful than yellow fever, although there is none scarcely more repulsive to the beholder, as seen in the black vomit, in the enormous flow of blood from the mouth, nose, ears, eyes, and even from the toes; the eyes prominent, glistening, injected, yellow and staring; the face discolored with yellow and dusky red! The corpse is

usually sad, sullen and perturbed ; the countenance dark, mottled, yellow, livid, stained with blood and black vomit, and swollen ; the eyes prominent, blood-shot and yellow. The veins of the body are often much distended, particularly about the head and neck, and the circulation of the blood often goes on for a long time after the heart ceases to beat ! The heat of the body, which before death was below the usual standard, (say not quite 90) often rises even half an hour after death to 105, 110, and even 113 degrees !

Dr. Dowler has succeeded in taking nearly five pounds of blood from the left jugular vein of a yellow fever corpse ! The blood flowed freely, jetting forth for five minutes entirely clear of the skin of the neck. It would be impossible to bleed a living man in this way half as much ; hence the circulation in the veins of the yellow fever corpse was more active and continuous than in life !

Prof. Dickson, of Charleston, S. C., the eminent physiologist, in commenting upon this last fact, says, very emphatically, "I scarcely know any fact in nature more incomprehensible than this !"

CAUSES OF YELLOW FEVER.

That the yellow fever of 1853 was not imported into New Orleans, but generated in that city by local causes, and individual conditions, seems to be almost generally admitted by those most competent to judge of the facts. This is my own decided opinion.

The exciting causes of the disease were, as near as we can ascertain, the following : Heat and cold ; rain and sunshine ; exposure to atmospheric changes and fatigue ; a foul atmosphere, produced by decaying animal and vegetable matter ; foul drains and dwellings ; rotting beds and imperfect ventilation ; excessive use of fat meat, and highly nutritious and stimulating food in a warm climate ; want of vegetables and fruits in the daily food ; bodies depraved and injured by the too free use of drugs, liquors, dissipation and other bad habits.

Dr. Bennet Dowler, in his tableaux of the Yellow Fever of 1853 makes the following observations upon the causes of the epidemic :

"How the style of buildings in New Orleans has so long escaped the grand jury is marvellous. About ninety in every hundred houses, even in the richer portion of the city, are constructed in a manner that must be condemned in any climate, but in none so much as in this city, depressed as it is below the high water mark of the river, almost everywhere, and in the rear nearly on the sea level. The lower floor, which rots about four times in ten years, in a great majority of the houses, especially the stores, rests on the humid soil, sometimes at a lower level than the streets, no air being admitted underneath!

"The fresh water, being largely mixed with decaying animal and vegetable matter, moistened by rains, and infiltrations from the river, gutters and swamps, generates perennial crops of *fungi*, blight, mildew, mould, &c., which abound in, under and around the lower story of these unventilated houses, where, indeed, crops of mushrooms would flourish, were they not repressed by the tread of the tenant. Hence goods rust and spot, delicate colors are discharged; health too is deteriorated from moist and insalubrious exhalations during the day, and at night, as many persons sleep upon these decaying humid floors.

"Physicians in visiting the poor, especially in depressed portions of the city, must have often found the flooring of houses floating, and sometimes, after rains, quite covered with water too filthy and offensive for description—laboratories for generating deadly gases, predisposing to disease, and rendering recovery from any kind of sickness tedious, too often impossible."

The poorer classes also slept on beds made of eypress moss, often damp and imperfectly prepared, a mass of rotting vegetable matter!

These and like causes have produced yellow fever over and over again, in all tropical climates, and will continue to produce it, under similar circumstances, as long as diseases of that type are permitted to prevail on the earth. That the atmosphere at New Orleans was peculiarly impure and stagnant during the epidemic, there is no doubt; but this alone was not enough to generate the disease in sound and healthy persons of good habits. That there may be an infectious or contagious principle generated by yellow fever patients, or present where yellow fever prevails, I will not stop to question, although it is not yet proved. But I do not think the disease would spread so generally, or become so fatal if people would take more pains to avoid the evident causes of the disease above enumerated. Chemically, we know that excess of fat, oil and sweet substances, will produce too much of the elements of bile in the blood; and that

large quantities of highly nutritious and stimulating food will produce a tendency to inflammation and fever. Liquor, dissipation and drugs will also impair the functions of the various organs of the body, particularly the stomach, liver and bowels. Now, yellow fever is a disease of a bilious and inflammatory character, and attacks the stomach, liver and bowels.

To keep clear of the disease, reason and science teach us to live on light food in summer, to eat less meat, and less fat and syrup, to avoid ardent spirits, irregularities of life, exposure to heat, cold and fatigue, and particularly to keep clear of powerful drugs. If we add to these precautions a little physical training, such as frequent bathing, moderate exercise, and attention to ventilation in our houses and chambers, we may do much to protect ourselves against this fatal disease.

That the yellow fever is not positively contagious or poisonous to all persons, is shown by the following facts :

The native French and Creole population of New Orleans, who live on little meat, bread, vegetables, fruits and light wines, and do not take much medicine, seldom fall victims to the yellow fever. Some of the native French population are now 90, 95, and even 115 years of age. Until 1853 they were supposed to be entirely exempt from the attacks of yellow fever. During the late epidemic, however, many of them took it and died.

Acclimated persons, (so called,) who have learned to conform to the requirements of nature, as to the food which ought to be used in this climate, are less liable to take the disease than new comers.

The natives of northern climates, who come to New Orleans with northern habits of feeding, are almost sure to be seized with the fever when it prevails as an epidemic.

The ignorant poor, who know nothing about the laws of life, and who come from a land of starvation to a land of plenty, from a cold climate to a hot one, and gorge themselves with fat bacon and corn bread, (oily and highly nutritious food,) and eat imprudently of fruit, are the most numerous victims of yellow fever. The natives of Ireland and Germany, newly arrived in the country, are those who chiefly fill the beds of the Charity Hospital, and the long trenches of the dead in Potter's Field.

The dissipated, of which class New Orleans has more than her share, are also ready victims of yellow fever.

The fact that there is nothing certainly poisonous to the human body in yellow fever, is shown by the fact that much the larger number of per-

sons of all descriptions, who are exposed to its influence, are in no way affected by it.

There are many persons in this city, male and female, who have nursed hundreds of yellow fever patients, stood over them, rubbed and bathed them, and inhaled the atmosphere of sick rooms for months, and even washed and shrouded the dead, without ever having a day's sickness. Many nurses in the Charity Hospital, where two hundred or more died per week, escaped the fever without a single symptom.

Mr. Lovejoy, one of the carpenters in Charity Hospital yard, worked hard all summer, within a few feet of the dead house, where fifteen or twenty bodies were often lying at once, waiting burial, and did not take the disease; and yet the stench, he told me, was sometimes so great as to nauseate him. He is a very healthy, temperate man, of regular habits. Six other carpenters, who assisted him, took the fever and died. Some of them made the very coffins in which they were buried. Mr. Lovejoy, speaking of one of them, said he was a hearty looking man, "but," added he, "he had very bad soft flesh."

I have attended, with other physicians, several post-mortem examinations of the bodies of yellow fever patients, twelve hours after death, in the months of July and August, when the epidemic was at its height, and the bodies were in a state of rapid decomposition, and very offensive. The dissections were very thorough and careful; every part of the body was opened and examined; the contents of the stomach and bowels were taken out and inspected, and the foul exhalations of the dead-house were of course inhaled by all who were present. Still we escaped infection or contagion.

Owen Lynch, the person employed to bury the dead in Potter's Field, assisted in digging all the graves, and hauling all the bodies which were buried in that general receptacle of the unfortunate, all summer, (over 2000,) and was not at all affected by his employment.

Cats, dogs, and fowls have been fed with black vomit, thrown up by yellow fever patients, without any injurious or indeed sensible effects; while the fumes obtained by the evaporation of the matter have proved inoffensive to men who inhaled them.

Dr. Firth, of Philadelphia, in 1804, fed dogs and cats with the matter of the black vomit, during days and weeks; he did more—he inoculated dogs with the fresh matter, and even subjected himself to the same operation, applying the fluid to the surface of a cut made on his arm; secured it there for two days by means of a sticking plaster, and repeated the ex-

periment about twenty times in various parts of his body. He inserted the matter in his eyes; swallowed a large quantity diluted and pure; but from these experiments no injurious effects ensued.

Dr. McKinnal, a Surgeon in the British Army on one occasion swallowed a wine-glass full of fresh black vomit, and felt no more effect from it than if so much water had been taken into the stomach. It did not impair his appetite for his dinner.

The whole history of epidemic yellow fever, in New Orleans, and indeed throughout the world, shows that although there may be some contagious or infectious principle abroad in the atmosphere where it prevails, yet it is not certainly poisonous to all persons alike. Some persons are poisoned easily; some with difficulty; and some not at all.

In my opinion it requires certain conditions of the system to produce the yellow fever:—viz: 1st. Bilious or carbonated condition of blood. 2d. Materials of inflammation in excess, that is excess of nutritious matter. 3d. Impaired functional power of organs, particularly of the stomach and liver. Under these conditions, the presence of highly impure air, or excess of carbonic acid gas or miasma, or the infectious matter of yellow fever, (if such there be) will no doubt produce this fearful disease in climates and seasons where it has heretofore appeared; while, on the contrary, a body whose organs are in a fair state of perfection, and not overloaded with the elements of bile and highly nutritious matter, cannot be easily affected by the yellow fever.

"It is impossible," says Dr. McFarlane, of New Orleans, "that yellow fever can suddenly assail an individual without his condition having undergone some *morbil changes* of vast and vital import." Again he says: "Let visitors to New Orleans live temperate, orderly, and virtuous lives, and not convert the entire period of their residence here into one continued saturnalia, and they will enjoy an exemption from disease fully equal to that of the place from whence they came."

In no city in the United States, is there so much irregularity of living, intemperance in eating and living, so much abuse and exposure of the body to destructive influences, as in New Orleans. When a decided change shall take place in the habits of the people, then, and not till then will yellow fever cease to prevail here.

That the condition of the atmosphere has much to do with the production of yellow fever, is conclusively shown, as Dr. McFarlane justly remarked in his report to the Sanatory Committee of the Legislature, by the fact that when the Board of Health declared the epidemic at an end,

from forty to fifty thousand strangers rushed into New Orleans with almost perfect impunity, although the city was still reeking with the consequences of the deadly epidemic, and cases were still daily occurring, and where nothing either positive or conjectural had occurred to account for the subsistence of the disease or the exemption of the strangers, except atmospheric changes. "The clouds," adds Dr. McFarlane, "which had so long, like a funeral pall, environed and hemmed us in had dispersed; a new and vivifying atmosphere had usurped their place, and we awoke to health and happiness." What the *specific* cause of yellow fever is, (if such a cause there be) or what its infectious principle, has not yet been discovered.

TREATMENT OF THE DISEASE BY PHYSICIANS AND NURSES.

As to the treatment of the yellow fever, by the use of drugs or medicines, I do not think that any very satisfactory information can be given. At least, no method of treatment was discovered which could claim the merit of success sufficient to commend it to our consideration. The disease was unusually malignant, and baffled the skill of the most scientific and experienced practitioners. The use of narcotics, and large doses of quinine, which had been resorted to in former years, was abandoned very early in the season, by the most judicious physicians. Still, the so called "abortive treatment," by means of large doses of quinine, was much employed, leaving the patient who recovered in a wretched condition, deafness, blindness, swelled limbs, and hopeless insanity being in many cases the final result.

When the patients were seen soon after the first symptoms appeared, castor oil was very generally administered when constipation existed, with comparatively good effect; but at a late stage of the disease, the oil was frequently rejected by the stomach, and black vomit, in such cases, generally set in very speedily, being no doubt excited by the nauseous and acrid nature of the drug.

Cupping, bleeding, and the use of calomel and blue pill, were found to be equally useless, though much employed. In the expenditures of the Howard Association will be found over \$1700 paid for cupping, bleeding, and leeching.

All violent, or "heroic" medication, after the disease was fully developed, was found to be more injurious than beneficial; and more deaths were no doubt caused by over-anxiety to give medicine than by the want of medicine.

Dr. McFarlane, in one of his essays on the subject says: "Let the acclimated person treat his symptoms of yellow fever as he would a common cold, and he is well in a few hours. But call his disease yellow fever, and give him sixty grains of Quinine, and who would be answerable for his safety?" No one, I think, pretends to have discovered any specific for the fever, or even the best method of treating it with medicines.

Good nursing, reliance upon the defensive and recuperative power of nature, and hygienic management, it must be confessed, saved more lives than medicine. All sensible and judicious physicians within the circle of my acquaintance, relied more upon such agencies than upon drugs. It was even the practice in the Charity Hospital to give no medicine to patients who were brought into that institution after being four days sick without medical aid; and a large number of these cases recovered.

The best method of nursing consisted in opening the bowels, when costive by mild injections of warm water and soap, or some simple fluid; soaking the feet in hot water, a mustard foot-bath; the administration of hot teas, or hot water, freely when cold and chilly; exciting perspiration by means of hot stones placed around the body while in bed; bathing the skin, with hot water or spirits, and stimulating the skin with coarse towels, or with ammoniated washes; giving the patient cold water to drink when feverish and thirsty; keeping the bed cool, the room well aired, and the clothing fresh and clean; removing all causes of mental excitement, and keeping the patient as quiet and cheerful as possible; giving little or no food of any description, especially when the patient began to mend and expressed a strong desire for food, or if any food was given, it was of the simplest and lightest kind.

This was the most successful of all kinds of treatment that I saw or heard of during the summer. Some tried highly nutritious food, early in convalescence; but I have yet to be convinced that it succeeded as well as the more cautious diet. Others used porter, and brandy; but I saw more cases of fatal relapse from such management, than from the more

abstemious course I have above described. Cases do certainly occur where slight stimulation, with porter or brandy may be useful, but they are more rare than some people like to imagine.

The attempt to control the epidemic by the firing of cannon and the burning of tar, we have alluded to in another place. Dr. Dowler describes the effect of these measures in very graphic language. He says: "At sunset the epidemic was regularly, for a time, attacked with great guns. But gunpowder failed. It did worse. Sleep to the sick is the turning point for life—the first glimmer along the dark horizon of the yet dubious morning. Sleep was broken—the intellect vibrating between reason and delirium, shattered by the clangor of arms and fever, raved with redoubled violence, and was sometimes quenched at once by a horrid convulsion amid the the roar of cannon. Tar-burning too was tried, but the epidemic raged the more. Terror was supreme."

A physician who died of the fever, left an unfinished poem of 200 lines on the epidemic, in which occurs the following passage on the firing of cannon and the burning of tar:

The sun sinks down o'er each death-crowded street,
While dread delirious screams the hearing greet;
Night settles o'er with awe and fear and gloom.
What means yon glaring blaze, yon cannon's boom?
Ha! victory's tokens for the conqueror Death!
Who slays his thousands by the *fever's* breath!"

The Homœopathic physicians claim to have treated the disease with much success by means of their peculiar remedies; but no full and accurate report of their practise has ever been made up, and it is impossible for us to give such an account of it as would prove useful to those unacquainted with the system, without occupying too much space in this work.





SICK WARDS,--CHARITY HOSPITAL.

CHARITY HOSPITAL.

The city of New Orleans is well supplied with Hospitals both public and private. The chief of these institutions is the famous CHARITY HOSPITAL in Common street.

The original edifice stood on the west side of Rampart street, between Toulouse and St. Peter streets. It was commenced by Dr. Roxas, a benevolent Spanish gentleman, in 1784, and was completed in 1786, at an expense of \$114,000. It was called the new Charity Hospital of St. Charles. He endowed it with a perpetual income of \$1,500 per annum, by appropriating the rent of stores at the corner of St. Peter and Levee streets. In 1810, the building was consumed by fire, and the management of the bequest was given up by the heirs of Dr. Roxas to the Legislature of Louisiana. A Council of eight members was appointed by the Senate and Governor. A most liberal legacy was left to the Hospital fund by Julian Poydras, of \$35,000; the State of Pennsylvania made a grant of \$10,000 towards this object; and the Council of Administration having sold some of the Hospital property to the State for \$125,000, in 1812, built the present large and commodious Hospital, on Common Street, at an expense of about \$150,000.

This edifice is of immense size, and presents a very imposing appearance. A very correct front view of the building is given in the engraving. It has two rear wings almost as large as the body of the building, and numerous other buildings, work shops, &c., the whole being inclosed by a substantial brick wall.

To show the great usefulness of this establishment, it is only necessary to state that upwards of 5,000 patients are frequently received and treated in its wards in a single year; and even when no epidemic prevails, between 700 and 800 persons die within its walls in twelve months. Less than one fifth of these are natives of the United States.

It may truly be called the home of the homeless and suffering stranger and the Asylum of the sick and distressed of all countries; for no distinction is ever made, in the reception of patients, on the score of religious faith or national origin.

In the main Hall of the Hospital, on the lower floor, is a large stone Tablet fastened to the wall, bearing the following inscription:

THE CHARITY HOSPITAL OF NEW ORLEANS

was founded in the year 1786, by

DON ANDRES ALMONASTER Y ROXAS,

To whose generous endowment,

The munificence of the Legislature of this State, and the liberality of the State of Pennsylvania,

This community is indebted for the means of erecting this edifice,

Built in the year 1832,

His Excellency, A. B. ROMAN, being Governor of the State and President of the Institution ;

To record which, and inscribe hereon the names and contributions of its distinguished benefactors,

THIS TABLET HAS BEEN ERECTED.

CONTRIBUTORS.

| | | | |
|-----------------|--------|---------------------------|---------|
| ETIENNE BORE, | 1,000 | ANDRES A. ROXAS, | 114,000 |
| ROBERT CAUNE, | 1,000 | And an income per year of | 1,500 |
| JULIAN POYDRAS, | 35,000 | STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA, | 10,000 |

The Hospital contains beds for about 500 to 600 patients ; but during the prevalence of the yellow fever, numerous cots were introduced, and a much greater number were received. The whole number of cases treated in this hospital in the summer of 1853, was 3,052, of which number 1,765 died. Nearly 300 died in one week, during the height of the mortality in August.

The whole establishment is kept in excellent condition, and every possible attention is paid to the comfort and cleanliness of the sick. While the fever raged at its worst, the discipline of the hospital was in no degree relaxed. Few male or female nurses shrank from duty ; the Sisters of Charity were constant in their attendance, to "shrive the dying and shroud the dead ;" numerous physicians were also present night and day ; the coffin makers worked hard ; the dead carts (six of them,) ran incessantly to and from Potter's Field ; the collecting wagons brought in the sick and dying every hour, and at the same time the "carriers" removed others from their beds to the "dead house," to wait their turn for removal to the grave ! What a task was here ! How awful to think of, to those who have never seen such an epidemic ; but to myself and many others it has lost half its terrors, and it is almost impossible to excite a sensation of horror by reflection upon it.

At no boarding house in New Orleans can a person, when seriously ill, obtain such care, medical aid, and good nursing, as he can at the Charity Hospital, even if he has money to pay for such assistance. But if he has no money, then the Hospital is usually the only place where he can hope for kindness, as a general thing. Its rooms, beds and bedding, are all scrupulously clean, and well aired ; and although the idea of lying down upon a cot where a man has just died of the yellow fever, might not be so very agreeable to some persons fortunately situated in life, the poor creatures who are brought here in a half dying state, have



THE "SISTER OF CHARITY."

little disposition to be fastidious in small matters. The "wards," or rooms contain from ten to fifteen or twenty beds each, as represented in the engraving of one of these wards in this work. The beds are arranged in rows, on all sides of the rooms, with narrow alleys between them, as in most other large hospitals. The engraving well represents the appearance of these "wards."

When a patient dies, the body is quietly rolled up in a sheet, pinned over the head and feet, and removed from the room by the "carriers," in a box with handles to it like a bier in a church-yard. It is then taken to the dead house for post-mortem examination or preparation for burial. In cases of epidemics some disinfecting agent is employed to sprinkle the bodies with a view to render them less offensive, or dangerous as a source of infection. Sometimes several persons will die and be removed to the dead house, and a patient lying within a few feet of the awful scene, with all his senses about him, will take little or no notice of the circumstance. The older and more feeble the patients, the less do such things appear to affect them. It seems as if the desire for life happily declines with the capacity to enjoy it.

Mr. Lovejoy, the carpenter who worked near the dead-house, and assisted to make nearly two thousand coffins during the epidemic of 1853, and some of the young men who drove the dead-wagons to Potter's Field, and handled the coffins over and over again, open and reeking with the effluvia of yellow fever as they were, even in July and August, were still living in the winter of 1854, when these pages were written, living witnesses that men, in a healthy state, may be exposed to the contagious influence of yellow fever, under the worst of circumstances, for many months in New Orleans, and yet not be in the slightest degree affected by it. Mr. Lovejoy is a temperate, industrious man, of good habits; and one at least of the drivers of the hospital wagons is the picture of good health. There is another carpenter in the Hospital Yard, Mr. Lum, who has worked at making coffins near the dead-house for twelve years!

The Sisters of Charity, who attend at the Hospital, are of great service to the sick, and no doubt afforded much comfort to the minds of poor Catholics in a dying condition, to whom they read prayers and administered much religious consolation. As nurses they cannot be excelled in kindness and careful attention. We give a sketch, in one of the engravings, of the appearance and costume of the Sisters of Charity at this Hospital, which is sufficiently unique to be interesting. The sisters have special charge of the food, the preparation of teas and infusions, and also

the care of the beds, the bed-coverings, clothing of patients, &c., &c. We cannot estimate their devotion to the cause of charity too highly.

THE CEMETERIES OF NEW ORLEANS.

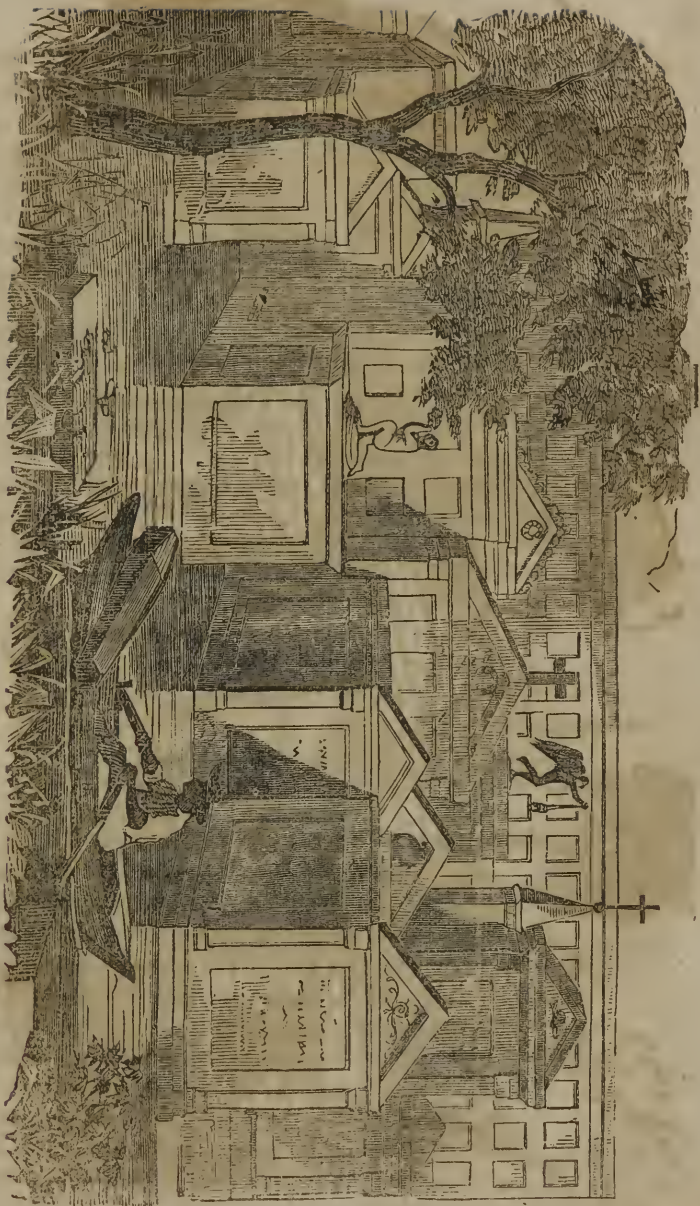
The burial grounds and cemeteries in New Orleans are unlike those of any other city of the United States. They have anything but an attractive appearance to strangers who have been accustomed to visit the beautiful cemeteries of Mount Auburn, at Boston; Greenwood, New York; Laurel Hill, at Philadelphia; or the still more beautiful resting places of the dead in Europe.

In consequence of the impossibility of digging graves in the earth without coming to water at six inches to two feet below the surface of the ground, very few if any bodies are buried in the earth within the thickly settled portion of the city, either in tombs or graves. All the vaults are built above the surface, chiefly of brick.

There are three general styles of constructing tombs. They are as follows:

1. Long ranges of vaults, each one capable of holding a single coffin, some five or six vaults in height, and many hundred feet in length. These vaults are built of brick, and occupy the entire sides of the cemetery. They are also built up with vaults on both sides of the structure in the open ground. The vaults of these tombs are called "OVENS." When a body is placed in them they are immediately sealed up with masonry, and a tablet is placed in front, on which the name, time of death, birth-place and age of the deceased person is inscribed. Hundreds of them, however, have no names at all on them, or only a scrawl, made with a stick or some rude instrument in the fresh mortar. The inscription on others is painted on pine boards, on slate, and occasionally graven on marble. We give an engraving which exhibits a very perfect representation of these "Ovens" of the dead.

2. The family vaults, or tombs, chiefly built of brick, and plastered



AMERICAN, OR PROTESTANT CEMETERY, NEW ORLEANS.



FAMILY TOMB, BUILT IN 1811.

or stuccoed, and containing one or more "Ovens." Some of these are of iron, some of granite, others of brown sand-stone and marble. Many of them, especially in the French cemeteries, are very handsome and appropriate. A sketch of one of these family tombs will be found in this work, carefully drawn and engraved.

3. The society tombs, of large size, containing many vaults or ovens, constructed in various ornamental styles, somewhat similar to that of the Orleans Battalion of Artillery represented in the engraving.

The method of burying the dead in graves and trenches, in Potter's Field, and in Charity Hospital cemetery, will be described in another place.

The cemeteries in the city are all very much crowded with tombs and monuments, leaving but little space for walks or shrubbery. It is to be regretted that they were ever permitted to be located in the heart of the city at all. The new cemeteries are all about four miles from the centre of the city, on the Metairie ridge.

The French and Catholic Cemeteries.

The French and Catholic cemeteries within the limits of the city, are all highly interesting to a stranger, and present many things which seem extremely curious and singular to a Protestant American.

The tombs are all erected above the earth, of brick and stone, as before described. Many of them are quite fanciful in form, and much the larger portion are decorated with various emblems of the regard of the living for their departed friends, or at least of their frequent presence and remembrance. The curious French inscriptions and mottoes on the tombs first attract attention, whether the visitor can read and understand them or not; next the abundance of crosses, and frail wooden railings, and other decorations of wood; then the numerous little images of Cupids and kneeling Saints in Plaster of Paris, most of them half washed away by rains, and with abundance of broken arms, legs and noses; wreaths of black, blue and pink paper, (glazed paper seems to be the favorite material,) hung

about the tombs; vases, large and small, and glasses full of natural and artificial flowers, in all stages of perfection, from the freshest natural bouquets down to the poor rain washed white-satin rose, spattered with mud and sadly neglected; fancy bugle and bead-work wreaths and other ornaments; little medals of metal and lithograph; and even large lithographic pictures of the Saints and the Virgin, in cheap mahogany frames covered with glass, hung over the tombs. One hardly knows what to say of such a display of affection, often so tawdry, artificial and fanciful; but still it is better than the utter absence of attention to the resting place of the dead, which formerly prevailed in some parts of the United States, and the desolate and forbidding aspect of the fields appropriated to this purpose in many thriving American towns even at the present day.

We give one of the French inscriptions on a family tomb.



ICI REPOSE

EVELINE LOPEZ,

Née à la N'le. Orléans,

le 27 Mai 1827,

décédée le 28 Mai 1851,

Agee de 25 ans.

Another tomb has on it simply, "Famille Augustin Rousseau."

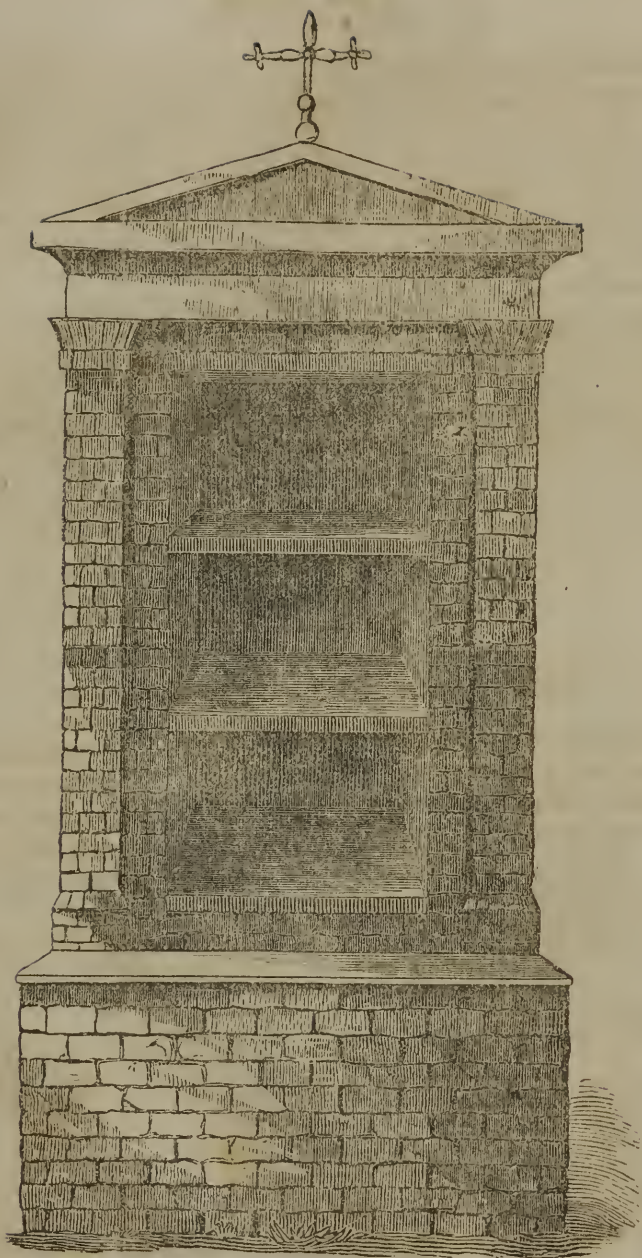
In one of the French cemeteries will be found the old tomb, given in the engraving in this work, showing how soon, and in what manner the brick tombs decay and fall to pieces. The best of them which have been constructed before this period will hardly last more than fifty years, in consequence of the want of firmness in the ground, and the rapid tendency to decay, produced by the moist atmosphere.

I took the trouble to copy the inscription and motto on the old tomb represented in the engraving, which shows that it was a married lady, only sixteen years and six months old, perhaps quite recently a bride. I do not happen to know the family. I refer to the tomb most broken in front, showing a view of the interior.

Inscription on the old tomb represented in the engraving.

1845

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY ASTOR LENOX TILDEN FOUNDATION



FAMILY TOMB, SHOWING THE INTERIOR OF THE VAULTS.



A GIL

ALIX CALISTE DUSSUAU DE LA CROIX

épouse de

A. B. Z. NOUCHET,

decedee le 7 Octobre 1811.

Age de 16 ans 6 mois.

Motto on the same tomb :

"Passant versez des pleurs la Vertu et la Jeunesse sont ensevelies dans ce tombeau."

Thus it will be perceived that the tomb had been standing only forty-two years when it was in the condition represented.

The Protestant, or American Cemetery.

The Protestant or American Cemetery is situated in the 2d District, or Municipality, fronting on St Paul street, and adjoining the yard of the city Work-house. In this cemetery a very large proportion of the American strangers who have died in New Orleans within the last twenty years, have found a resting place, when they or their friends were able to pay for an "oven" or a "tomb."

It belongs to the society of Christ Church, and is managed with much care. Great efforts have been made to repair and improve it; but it is still, as compared with burial grounds more favorably situated, in a very unattractive condition.

The tombs are all built above the ground, after the usual style of New Orleans cemeteries, chiefly of brick, with ovens or vaults for single coffins or for family use, as described in another part of this work. The cemetery has been much flooded with water in rainy seasons, and the water constantly stands in the open ditches and drains about the grounds, in the driest weather, covered with green slimy matter. Efforts are now being made to fill up the principal walks and paths with stable manure, street

dirt, oyster shells, and other material, so as to place them above the rise of water; but some time ago, before this was done, the undertakers have frequently floated about the paths of this cemetery in a boat to bury the dead, as represented in the engraving, which gives a very good general view of the principal street or path in the grounds, as seen from the interior. There are no bodies buried in the earth in this cemetery; all the burial places are above the earth, and most of them out of the reach of water.

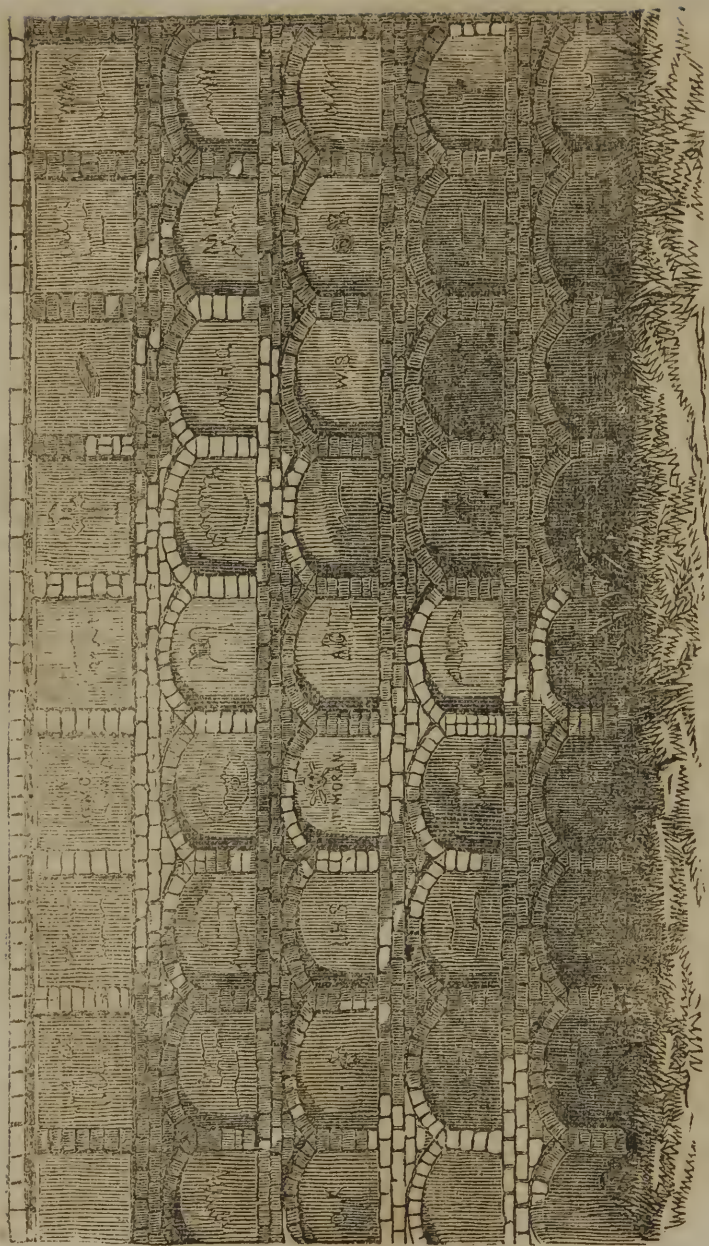
In this cemetery is deposited the body of Lieut. Col. W. W. S. BLISS, the son-in-law of the late Gen. Taylor, who died of yellow fever, at Pascagoula, Miss., on the 5th of August, 1853, aged 38. Col. Bliss won a high reputation by his military services under Gen. Taylor in the Mexican war, and had the credit of preparing the despatches forwarded by the General to the government at Washington, which were so much admired as specimens of that kind of writing. Col. Bliss was private secretary of General Taylor after he became President; married his daughter Betsy Taylor, and was chief heir to the fortune of the General, which was not small. He was a highly educated, talented gentleman, and held a very enviable position in the world's esteem. For such a man to be cut off from his budding hopes in life, at the age of thirty-eight, was melancholy in the extreme. Mrs. Bliss erected a beautiful monument to his memory, a correct sketch of which is given in the engraving.

Gen. Taylor's body, and also that of his wife, is deposited in a cemetery at Louisville, Kentucky. The sarcophagus of Col. Bliss's tomb is so constructed that it can be enlarged for a family tomb, or it can be removed entire, without opening it, if it should be desired to change its place of deposit. It is composed of pure Italian marble.

H. R. N. HILL, the well known merchant and steamboat owner, also died of yellow fever, and was buried in the American Cemetery. He died on the 17th of September, 1853, aged 57. His family reside at Nashville, Tenn., whither it is designed to remove the body.

The largest and finest tombs in the Protestant Cemetery, (public or society tombs,) are those *owned and erected by slaves*. This is a fact which should be taken notice of by Mrs. Stowe in her next edition of her "Key." The "ovens" contain a large number of slaves; for any one who has money enough to pay for an oven can be deposited in this cemetery, whether black or white, bond or free. The cost of burial in the "ovens" or in the vaults of the society tombs, is about twenty dollars. This is sometimes paid by the slave, and very frequently by the master.





THE "DEAD OVENS," OR SINGLE VAULT.

The slaves have, however, by means of the principle of association, erected fine monuments and tombs of their own, as above named. They are owned by the following societies of slaves, viz: "The First African Baptist Association, of New Orleans;" the "Colored Widows' Friend's Benevolent Association;" the "John Wesley Colored Society;" the "Colored Home Missionary Benevolent Society;" and the "Colored Benevolent Lutheran Society." This last Society has a tomb containing upwards of seventy large vaults—a very elegant and costly edifice, entirely above ground. These structures are erected from the savings of slaves, which often amount to no inconsiderable sum. At the North, with many people these "nigger tombs" would be considered a disgrace to a cemetery, which would render it extremely unpopular with the white population. The relative position of the colored people is often far more comfortable in the South than it is at the North, in respect to this point, and many others of like character.

To show the nature of the interments in the Protestant Cemetery, I have copied from the "ovens" a large number of the inscriptions, by which it will be seen that the occupants of this cemetery are from all parts of the United States, and indeed of Protestant Europe; and also the melancholy fact that much the larger portion of them are *young men, not over 35 years of age*, who have fallen victims to yellow fever and cholera, in this ill-fated city, since 1832. The following are some of the inscriptions:

Wm. Blecker Plume, son of Col. John J. Plume, of Newark, N. J., died of yellow fever, August 13, 1847, aged 26.

Daniel Staples, first officer of ship Hartley, native of Wells, Maine, died of yellow fever, October 14, 1848, aged 30.

Geo. P. Walton, of Montpelier, Vt., died April 26, 1841, aged 23.

Frances Cordelia Buckner, wife of B. P. Buckner, of Louisville Ky., died October 30, 1837. (In pencil: "B. P. Buckner visited this grave May 9th, 1853.")

Capt. J. D. Jackson, of Tennessee, died of yellow fever, August 29, 1847, aged 28.

James Frizel, of Ireland, died of cholera, December 28, 1848, aged 26.

Albert J. Coffin, of Natchez, Miss., died May 22, 1852.

David Steele, portrait painter, of Auburn, N. Y., died July 24, 1839, aged 37.

Julia Banks, of Richmond, Va., died February 23, 1839, aged 40.

George Robinson, of Philadelphia, died August 21, 1853, aged 32.

" Far away from kindred, chosen friends were near,
To close the eyes of one whom all held dear."

Charles F. Gnospelius, of Stockholm, Sweden, died of yellow fever, August 13, 1853, aged 36. Erected by the Philharmonic Society and friends of Art.

Donald Watson, of East Windsor, Connecticut, died August 30, 1853, aged 22.

Joseph M. Martin, of County Managhan, Ireland, died September 2, 1853, aged 42.

Matteo P. Zaratin, of Italy, died June 13, 1853, aged 43.

Lewis H. Lewis, of Albany, New York, died August 11, 1852, aged 18.

Perry S. Warfield, died October 30, 1853, aged 34. His own lines, composed for others, are his fittest epitaph :

" Is not the grave a peaceful resting place,
When life's tumultuous checkered scenes are past ?
Here sorrow ends, and pleasure's giddy chase :
In death's embrace we calmly sleep at last."

Robert S. Brenham, of Frankfort, Kentucky, died October 7, 1843.

Capt. Robert Trim, of Camden, Maine, died of yellow fever, October 1, 1843, aged 27.

H. T. Oviatt, of Milford, Connecticut, died June 2, 1851, aged 34.

George McCormick, of Washington city, D. C., died July 12, 1848, aged 46.

William B. Belden, of Hudson, New York, died August 23, 1850, aged 25.

Rowland Peel, of Oneida county, New York, killed by the explosion of the steamboat Louisiana, November 15, 1849, aged 30. Erected by his friend, Jacob Peterson.

Near by the above is this inscription:

Jacob Peterson, of Delaware county, Pennsylvania, died May 27, 1850, aged 33.

Jacob S. Miears, of New York, died March 6, 1853, aged 49.

Horace F. Davis, of Norwich, Connecticut, died July 28, 1851, aged 29.

William P. Dunnington, of Baltimore, Maryland, died February 18, 1850, aged 63.

William A. Hartnell, native of New York, (36 years a resident of New Orleans,) died of cholera, at San Antonio, Texas, April 29, 1849, aged 65.

Rev. John Newton Allen, of Shelbyville, Kentucky, died December 30, 1835, aged 28.

R. G. Lines, of Utica, New York, operator in the Telegraph Office, New Orleans, drowned in Chef Menteur Pass, March 16, 1848.

Thomas Johnston, a native of Charlestown, Massachusetts, died August 21, 1830, aged 21.

William C. Deafenbach, of Philadelphia, died November 8, 1830.

Nathaniel Middaugh, native of Brown county, Ohio, died November 30, 1830, aged 21.

James Hosmer, a native of Middlesex county, Massachusetts, died February 23, 1831, aged 45.

Lloyd B. Cooper, of Middletown Connecticut, died September 26, 1830, aged 20.

George Backus, of Pomfret, Connecticut, died May 15, 1831, aged 30.

A. M. Willard, of Boston, Massachusetts, died July 6, 1831, aged 22.

Lloyd J. Bryan, of Norfolk, Virginia, died March 27, 1843, aged 30.

James S. Murphy, of Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, died January 31, 1848, aged 30.

Mrs. Hester Delmean, of Baltimore, Maryland, died October 25, 1832, aged 16 years and 6 months.

John B. Carter, of Nashville, Tennessee, died December 27, 1847, aged 51.

Edward D. Deblois, of Boston, Massachusetts, died September 15, 1832, aged 24.

John Nicholson, of Philadelphia, (for 40 years a citizen of New Orleans,) died May 17, 1848, aged 65.

A. C. Ainsworth, of Providence, Rhode Island, died May 5, 1851, aged 42. Mrs. A. C. Ainsworth, died July 22, 1852, aged 32.

Capt. George Robbins, of Somersworth, New Hampshire, died May 30, 1833, aged 67.

C. S. Holmead, of Washington city, D. C., died September 2, 1848, aged 29.

Mrs. Aurelia Smith, died on her way from the city of Mexico to Boston, November 28, 1847.

Jethro Folger, of Cincinnati, (a native of Nantucket, Massachusetts,) died May 19, 1833, aged 38.

Mrs. Ann Parker, wife of John J. Parker, of Philadelphia, died May 3, 1833, aged 25.

Lieut. William C. Grissam, of the Natchez Fencibles, died March 15, 1833, aged 30. Erected by his surviving fellow soldiers.

William Wood, of Frankfort, Kentucky, died March 7, 1833.

Jacob Klein, of Norfolk, Virginia, died April 13, 1833.

William Sharp Maurice, of Norfolk, Virginia, died April 16, 1833.

B. F. Wish, of Charleston, South Carolina, died February 3, 1849, aged 27. Erected by his wife.

William Hower, Boston, Massachusetts, died September 18, 1847, aged 46.

William Clay, of Philadelphia, died September 9, 1833; and Ann, his wife, died September 16, 1833.

Boswell McNeill King, of Savannah, Georgia, died July 31, 1847, aged 15 years.

Vincent R. Hagan, of Kentucky, died of yellow fever, September 7, 1847, aged 26.

Louis A. Labuzan, of Augusta, Georgia, died June 6, 1839, aged 29.

Lieut. David Henderson, who was killed twelve miles from the city of Vera Cruz, in a skirmish with the guerillas, February 19, 1848, aged 24.

Emily Eliza, wife of Christopher Hackinger, native of Litchfield, Connecticut, died May 25, 1850, aged 28.

Capt. Charles H. Killam, died September 10, 1841, aged 33; of the brig Neva, of Boston, the first vessel that entered the Mississippi river direct from Calcutta.

James Harrington, of St. Louis, died March 9, 1851, aged 23.

George Stanley, of Boston, died March 31, 1850, aged 32.

Alexander Pope, son of Le Roy Pope, of Huntsville, Alabama, died October 22, 1834, aged 31.

William H. McConnell, first officer of ship Russia, died August 20, 1848, aged 29; a native of Ireland.

John Bell, of Scotland, died August 30, 1848, aged 23.

Arthur M. Henderson, of Huntsville, Alabama, died September 23, 1848, aged 25.

Abner Perrin Hearst, of Edgefield, South Carolina, died October 15, 1848, aged 22.

John Murray, of Louisville, Kentucky, (born in Washington city,) died January 15, 1849, aged 41.

Capt. J.'D. Taylor, of Baltimore, Maryland, died August 30, 1846, aged 56.

Capt. D. Wheaton, of Vermont, died November 1, 1833, aged 28.

William Anderson, of Staunton, Virginia, died March 9, 1847, aged 45.

Rev. James Foster Hull, a native of Belfast, Ireland, for 18 years Rector of Christ Church, New Orleans, died June 6, 1833, aged 57.



SOCIETY MONUMENT,—ORLEANS BATTALLION OF ARTILLERY.



Magdaline Agatha, consort of Rev. J. F. Hull, native of Dublin, Ireland, died December 5, 1844, aged 54.

The better class of cemeteries are chiefly built like the French Catholic and the Protestant Cemetery. Of this class are the Cypress Grove Cemetery, No. 1, (the Firemen's,) the Odd Fellows' Rest, and the St. Patrick Cemetery, about four miles from the city, on the Metairie Ridge, near Potter's Field, and the Charity Hospital ground.

Potter's Field.

"POTTER'S FIELD" is the general name given to a large tract of land, say about fifty acres, which lies on the verge of "Cypress Swamp," about four miles from the city of New Orleans, on what is called the Metairie Ridge, and in the immediate vicinity of the Firemen's, the Odd Fellows' and the St. Patrick's Cemetery, and also of the famous "Metairie Race Course." The gate of "Potters Field" bears a sign marked "Cypress Grove, No. 2," but it is more generally known by the striking title above given. One-half the ground is appropriated for the general burial place of the poor and unfortunate, who have no "oven" or tomb provided for their reception, from the city generally; and the other half is under the immediate direction of the Charity Hospital.

The ground is just a rough field, enclosed with a fence, very low and wet in some parts of it, and in the best part not so much raised as to prevent the water from standing in pools on the surface of the earth, during heavy rains. At the entrance of the ground is a large pool of water, full of reeds, and the remnants of a boat were lying there in the winter of 1854, showing that it was necessary at times to have some other means of navigating the place than merely walking. A few large cypress trees are scattered over the field, their limbs heavily loaded with funeral moss, and the rear of the grounds are entirely bordered with these melancholy specimens of vegetable life.

In the Potter's Field there are few well marked or well protected graves, and no ovens or tombs above ground. All the bodies buried here, are

deposited in the *earth*, or rather in the *water*. The graves are dug about two or three feet deep, according to the state of the water, and even in the driest seasons generally contain, when the coffin is lowered into them, about a foot or two of water. In the summer of 1853 about 4,000 bodies were buried in these grounds. The ground was somewhat dry at times, but it rained very frequently and filled the graves and trenches after they were dug, and consequently almost all the bodies were buried in water. The coffin will generally float in the grave. The workmen generally press it down with a shovel, or stand on it while the grave is being filled up! This story, so commonly and generally told, of burials in the earth in New Orleans, is really and literally true; but when the fact is seen it does not appear so terrible as does the relation of it. You generally come to water six inches below the surface of the earth, or one foot at least, in almost any part of New Orleans. But the soil is very compact and solid, (being of a clayey nature,) and the graves, though half full of water, are yet very firm. It is true, the soil in some places, is quite boggy and shaky, but it is not so in the larger portion of Potter's Field; and it is not perforated by water rats or any animals of that description. Alligators have formerly been seen in great numbers, in that vicinity, but they are now quite rare, at least within a mile or so of the burial ground.

When but few deaths occur, the bodies are buried in Potter's Field in single graves, just as they are in the country burial grounds all over the United States. But in times of epidemics, long trenches or ditches are dug, some two or three thousand feet long, and the bodies are buried in them as close as they can be packed. Owen Lynch, who attended all the burials in this place, in 1853, says that in few if any cases were the bodies buried in large holes, or piled one upon another; nor were any buried in sheets or blankets; nor was any attempt made to burn them. He says it required a gang of twelve and fifteen men, in July and August, to dig the graves and cover the dead in Potter's Field, and more in the Charity Hospital grounds; but never, except in one instance, were any bodies left lying unburied for many hours, in the hot sun, as was reported. He says the bodies were all in coffins or boxes, and never two in a box, except now and then a child with its parent or friend, and the same, (a man and boy together,) in the Charity Hospital boxes.

The engraving gives a very correct idea of the chief view in the Potter's Field. It is impossible to give the whole field in the sketch, without making all the objects too minute. On the left will be seen the long trenches or "winrows," as some have called them, where hundreds upon

hundreds of bodies lie with not so much as a stick to mark the place. In several instances, friends of the deceased appear to have followed the coffin and stuck up a rude cross, made of rough bits of pine wood, with some writing, (perhaps in pencil,) to indicate who lies beneath the clay; but thousands of graves are entirely nameless. The single graves are, great numbers of them, marked with sticks and crosses, bearing some rude inscription; but there is not a single stone monument, or other durable memorial, in the whole field, which no doubt contains eight or ten thousand bodies, for a very large portion of it is filled as closely as the bodies can lie. One portion of it, filled some few years ago, is quite overgrown with tall, thick, blackberry bushes, which flourish enormously, enriched as they are with the bones and ashes of so many thousand human beings in the soil beneath them, the victims of cholera and yellow fever in former years, and these bushes bear a rich harvest of fruit which the poor wretches from the city, who are soon to lie in the same soil, do not hesitate to gather and eat with as much relish as if they were grown in a pleasure garden instead of an epidemic cemetery.

Besides the sticks and crosses which mark some of the graves, there are a few surrounded by neat wooden railings, painted white, and others have a substantial board placed at the head and foot, with carefully painted letters on them. As a general thing however, the Potter's Field and the Charity Hospital Grounds are the last homes of the "nameless dead." Very rarely are the bodies buried here, followed to the grave by mourning friends. The solitary hearse, the corporation carts, or the hospital wagons, come out with their load of dead, often half a dozen coffins or boxes at a time, during the epidemic; they are unloaded in a pile and hurried promiscuously into the earth with the least trouble or ceremony possible. No prayer is uttered; no sigh is breathed by any human lips. Some poet has said:

"There is a tear for all who die;
A mourner o'er the humblest grave."

But here, in Potter's Field, New Orleans, this sentiment, which it is so pleasant to believe, is proved a falsehood and a mockery. Hundreds go to their long home, and no eye is dimmed in consequence; no human being mourns their departure. Their grave is unmarked by stick or stone; the very coffin is a nameless one! Not so much as a piece of chalk is employed to write their names upon the rough, unplanned and unpainted boxes in which they lie!

Within a few rods of Potter's Field—not more than fair rifle-shooting distance—is the “Metairie Race Course,” and the drinking saloons, and pleasure gardens connected with that famous resort the “Half-Way House” on the way from New Orleans to the Lake. To reach this place the best route lies over that celebrated theatre for the display of “fast young men,” the renowned “Shell Road?” The old Shell Road, along by the canal, is now abandoned for a free one, called the “Bienville Road,” even superior to the old one for fast driving. The funerals to all the large cemeteries on the Metairie Ridge, the solitary hearse, the dead carts, the hospital wagons, the “fast crabs,” and the fashionable turn-out, with the gay buck and his ladies, all now travel the same broad and beautiful road daily; and the “fast men” run races with death and his numerous “teams,” on the way to the cemeteries and Potter's Field. The hearses and dead carts apparently come in second best, in these daily races, but the old grey-beard, in whose service they are, generally overtakes the young bloods, and wins the stakes in the long run.

In the summer of 1853 the new “Shell Road” was quite deserted by the fashionables; but more riding or driving was never seen on that popular thoroughfare in the same space of time. It was one constant procession of hearses, carriages, carts and wagons, the whole time, every day, and even till late in the evening. So great was the travel that the road was deeply cut up with ruts, (a most unusual thing for so hard a road, M'Adamized with shells,) and rendered in consequence very uncomfortable to travel upon. So deep were these ruts, and so difficult to fill up, that even six months afterwards it was unusually rough.

Standing in Potter's Field, the clink of glasses, as the bucks take their liquor at the saloons, may be distinctly heard; and the shouts upon the “Race Course” often sound as if the entire army of the dead, lying beneath its sods, had suddenly been roused from their graves and were shouting in triumph at their deliverance from the cold embrace of death! The races are often held on Sunday, and the “sounds of revelry” which proceed from that quarter have a most startling effect upon persons accustomed to observe the day in a religious manner. Such is life in New Orleans; or rather such are the incongruous combinations of *life* and *death* in this great Southern metropolis.





INCIDENTS OF THE EPIDEMIC.

The Artist and his Child.

On the 5th of August I was called to see a little boy, the son of an artist, recently arrived in the United States, who was living in an obscure room, in one of the most filthy streets of the city, where the fever was prevailing with fearful malignity. The artist was a fine looking man, with a splendid head, a dark poetical eye, and ambrosial hair. He seemed deeply affected by the condition of his child, and still more so at his want of means to pay for the necessary attendance, and to provide more comfortable quarters. He said he was a widower, and this was his only child, a fine boy about five or six years of age. The mother died when the infant was some three months old.

"The life of the child," said the artist, "has been one continued torture: he was weaned at three months, and we attempted to bring him up by hand. This failed, and he was reduced to a perfect skeleton. One day when I was kissing him, he sucked my cheek violently. I said, this child wants the breast even now. I got a wet-nurse instantly, and he seized the breast like a young tiger. In a few months he recovered sensibly—but the poor woman who came to suckle him had weaned her own child. I called on the nurse, before she came, and found she was in great poverty, and had a fine baby.' I said, 'what do you do with this child?' She said, 'wean it, sir; we are poor, and must do so.' I went away. 'Is this just?' thought I, 'to risk the life of another child to save my own?' I went home, tortured as to what I should do, but a desire to save the life of my own child predominated. The nurse came; my boy was saved; but the fine baby of the poor nurse paid the penalty. I was never easy. My boy never can, never will prosper, thought I. What right had I to take advantage of the poverty of this poor woman to save my own child, when I knew she had an infant of her own? My apprehensions have been shown to be well founded, for the boy never has prospered. He is a noble-looking child, sir, but he has always been ill, often dangerously so, and now, with this fearful fever, I have no hopes of his life!"

I endeavored to give the fond parent some encouragement; but on a careful examination of the child, I saw that he had too much brain for the strength of his body and the size of his chest, and I felt that the chance of saving his life would be but feeble. The boy was evidently highly

gifted. The father showed me some evidences of his talent in drawing, which were truly wonderful for one of his age. But no power of man could save the frail child of genius. In less than forty-eight hours he died, not so much of yellow fever, (though he had marked symptoms of it,) as of disease of the brain. Soon after death, however, the body turned yellow, and left no doubt that there was yellow fever in the case.

I soon perceived that the death of the boy had given a shock to the mind of the father from which he would never effectually recover. I became deeply interested in him, and visited him often. He would not permit the body of his son to be removed from the house, but insisted on painting a portrait of him after he was laid out. He had the body washed with a preparation of arsenic, and the mouth filled with antiseptic substances, and even after he was laid in the coffin, for nearly four days, continued to sketch the beautiful face of his dear child, painting portrait after portrait, and destroying them as soon as completed, in consequence of their seeming imperfection. At first I was inclined to humor this fancy of the devoted father; but I soon saw indications of insanity in his conduct, and then yellow fever in his face, and finally—death!

I had the body of the child removed to the cemetery, and the artist father followed his dear son, in less than a week, to his last resting place on earth. They were evidently entire strangers in New Orleans. I learned very little more of their history than I have related. His personal effects were few. Money he had none. His chief treasures seemed to be his son, and a few peculiar pieces of ladies jewelry, a miniature of a lady, (probably his wife,) and various other little mementoes of affection, which, (as I paid the expense of the burial,) I took the liberty of retaining in my own possession, being of little value except as remembrances of the children of genius, whose last hours I had the satisfaction of soothing with a few words and acts of kindness.

The Weak Mother.

A lady in affluent circumstances had gone up the coast to spend the summer, leaving her young son, a clerk, in the city. Hearing that he was

seized with the fever, the fond mother took a boat and came to the city to see him. She rode up in a carriage from the wharf to the house in which her son boarded. On her way, she encountered several hearses and funeral processions. The sight of these melancholy symbols of mortality naturally added to her alarm and nervousness. Finally the carriage stopped before the boarding house of her son. There was that dark vehicle of the dead, with its plumes and the sleepy negroe, drawn up at the door.

"Who is dead here?" asked the lady, in a tremulous, choked voice.

"It is a young man, a clerk in a store," replied a servant at the door.

"My son! my son!" exclaimed the agonized and half-fainting mother. But even at that time, with the instinct of a mother, remembering that she had other children to live for, she ordered the coachman to drive back to the boat, upon which she left that evening for her country residence. Now a strange result followed. The son recovered. It was another young clerk who had died in the same boarding house; the agonized and frightened mother had omitted to mention her son's name. But, alas! the unhappy lady, who could not bear to look upon the corpse of her dead son, returned to her country residence only to die of the disease, the fear of which prevailed over her natural affection. A more revolting case is that of the unburied daughter.

The Unburied Daughter.

A young girl about sixteen years of age was seized with the fever in a house where she lived with her father, mother, and other relatives. She was deserted and neglected in the early stage of the disease. At last a cab was called to take her to the hospital. Wrapped up in a blanket, she was placed in the cab, and the driver was ordered to proceed as rapidly as he could to the hospital. But the cabman loitered on the way, and even stopped at a cabaret to take a drink. Thus it was two hours before he reached the hospital. When the cab arrived in front of the clerk's office, the usual questions were called out to the patient: "What is your

name? where are you from?" There was no reply from the object rolled up in the blanket. The questions were repeated in a louder tone.

No reply.

"Roll her out, cabman," called out the clerk.

The cabman pulled off the blanket, and a stiff, staring corpse fell heavily on the seat. "She is dead!" exclaimed the clerk; and, turning to the next cab, called out, "Drive up, and let us see what you have got." With pencil in hand, he had re-commenced his eternal queries to a new patient: "What's your name, age, country?" When the unfortunate carrier of the corpse, having recovered from the alarm naturally excited by the discovery of the character of his burden, asked the clerk of the hospital what he should do with his load. "Take her home and make her friends bury her," was the curt reply. The cabman cracked his whip and dashed off in the direction of the house where he had received his load. He found the windows and doors of the house tightly closed, and a tar-barrel burning in the yard. Rapping for some time violently at the door, he at last discovered an upper window shutter slowly moving, and a pale, frightened countenance peeping through the small open space.

"What do you want?" nervously inquired the person from the window—as if it were midnight, and he feared the attack of a robber.

"Here is your daughter, dead in my cab, and I want you to take her and bury her."

A deep groan and noise, followed by a violent slamming of the shutters, were the only responses to the solicitation of the cabman. Now the latter began to be alarmed. What could he do with a corpse! They would not receive her at the hospital; her parents refused her—and he could not afford to bury her. At last it occurred to him to take her to the nearest cemetery. Away he started as fast as his wearied horse could drag the cab. Arrived at the cemetery, the sexton was asked to receive a corpse.

"Where is the certificate?"

"I have none."

"It can't be done."

"Here she is!" and the cabman unrolled the blanket.

"What! not even coffined—and no certificate! I'll have you arrested."

"Oh, lordy!" exclaimed the now thoroughly frightened cabman; and, jumping into his cab, drove rapidly back to the house of the dead girl's parents. Here he took the corpse out, and laying it on the steps of the house, drove away. Some charitable citizens, passing by, observed the

corpse ; and, after vainly trying to arouse the persons within, sent off for a corporation coffin, in which the body of the unfortunate girl was inclosed, and duly buried. In a week afterward the house, which was barricaded against the fever, as the hearts of its inmates were against all human and natural feeling, was emptied by the grim destroyer, and, as it appeared in this case, avenger and punisher !

Matrimonial Devotion.

In contrast with these instances of human weakness and cowardice, many noble and inspiring examples of devotion, courage, and affection crowd into our memory. Never shall we forget a scene described to us by a friend, who witnessed it. A poor couple were seized with the fever about the same time, and lay in the same bed, in a damp, uncomfortable house or shanty. A doctor was called, who directed that the man should be sent to the hospital—adding that the woman was too low and weak to be removed. Hearing the direction of the physician, the poor patients clung to one another with all their strength, and declared that they would not be separated, but would die together. Force had to be used. Several strong men were called, who, by main strength, tore the unfortunate husband from the arms of his wife, who fell back on the bed in violent convulsions. The man was placed in a cab, which was ordered to take him to the Charity Hospital. On his arrival there he was in a dying condition, and the next day his body was in the dead-house. His poor wife quickly followed him to that home where they can no more be separated, and where their affections may bloom forever, without the blight of disease or sorrow.

Mon Pauvre Pere.

On the noon of a very warm day in August, we observed the corporation cart drawn up before a small house. We waited for a while to see what load it would bear. Presently, we saw one of those horrible black coffins—made of coarse, unplanned wood, smeared with lamp-black—brought out of the house, supported by two men, a young girl, and a boy about twelve years old. The coffin was deposited in the cart; the dirty, coatless boy who was driving, whipped up the lazy horse, and off they started for Lafayette Cemetery, nearly two miles off. In the middle of the street, under a broiling sun, followed the girl and boy, walking hand in hand, with every indication of deep sorrow and grief. Several citizens stopped them, and endeavored to dissuade them from the long journey, but the poor orphans made no other reply than the agonizing, heart-rending exclamation, "*Mon pauvre pere! Mon pauvre pere!*" And thus with wailing and piteous cries they performed their dreary pilgrimage. We confess that this funeral procession impressed us more deeply and sorrowfully than the most solemn cortege which wealth, art, or taste ever devised. These poor children were the last of a large family of French emigrants who had recently landed in the city. On mentioning their case, more than a hundred dollars were pressed upon us to give to them. But on calling at the house where the coffin had been received, we found it closed, and could never gather any tidings of the unfortunate orphans. Probably they followed their parents, and brothers, and sisters.

The Exultant Belle.

The Shell Road, which runs along the banks of the new canal, through which passes the commerce of the Lake, in the rear of the city, is the fashionable drive of New Orleans. It is a beautiful road, shaded the whole distance, and so perfectly level, being macadamized with shells taken from the bottom of the Lake, that you can hardly perceive the motion of

your vehicle as it glides over it. On the right of the road, near the half-way station, and separated from it by the canal, are the principal cemeteries of the city. This road, the resort of the gay, the dissipated, the pleasure-loving, and of those who delight in horse-flesh and the excitement of fast driving, was not abandoned during the rage of the pestilence. Indeed, there seemed more parties on the road than usual at this season of the year, and they drove faster and shouted louder, as if they were running away from the grim destroyer, and uttering their defiance of him. And when they arrive at the elegant hotel on the Lake, and luxurious suppers, with a plentiful flow of generous liquors, are served up to them, the echoes along the Lake shore are awakened by their noisy hilarity, their joyous exultation, and loud bacchanalian strains. These are mostly persons who would drive off the dark fears which, in moments of quiet, possess their minds and enchain their spirits—the gloomy forebodings of the approach of the pestilence to their own habitations and persons. Others there were, who sought to relieve the tedium and gloom in which the city and its people are sunk, by a little forced gayety and oblivious dissipation. To this class belonged a gay party, composed of several gentlemen and ladies, who, on a certain Friday evening about the middle of August, dashed down the Shell Road to Callom's, for the purpose of relieving their spirits of the oppression of the scenes presented in the city, by a supper and other festivities.

The gayest and loveliest of the party was a young married lady, a New Yorker by birth, whose husband was absent from the city on business. She was in the full bloom of health and beauty, the cynosure of all eyes, in a city where a healthy and pretty woman had become a *rara avis*. Her joyous, ringing laughter, her brilliant, clear complexion, and bright eyes, her ever bounding spirits and sanguine temperament, seemed to dissipate the prevailing gloom wherever she moved. The supper at the Lake was, of course, a gay and merry one. All was forgotten but present enjoyment, and every means of merriment and gayety were employed to while away the hours. It was late when the carriages were ordered up to take them back to the city. Excited by the generous liquors and food, the reckless roysterers gave full rein, and plied with whips their high-spirited steeds, until their pace increased to a frightful rapidity, which rendered all objects along the road undistinguishable. Thus, they passed those gloomy abodes of hundreds, who a few days before had been as full of life and of hope as themselves—where now many a flickering torch threw a lurid glare over dark groups of wailing friends paying the last

sad rites to some departed relative—where the sound of sorrow and lamentation rose plaintively to Heaven, and from which came that revolting odor of decaying mortality, that mingled with and corrupted the sweet south wind. But the solemnizing influence of these scenes did not reach these heartless votaries of pleasure. They only provoked careless jests, reckless levity, bold defiance, and maudlin shouts. They had read the *Decameron*, and were emulating the insensibility and “heroism” of those imaginary characters, so glowingly painted by the matchless Boccaccio. And so they entered the gloomy city—gloomy in a moral sense, for nearly every window was lighted up, as if there was a general illumination on some great occasion of festivity. But, alas! it was the illumination of the chambers of the sick and the dead—in which might be discerned the fitting figures of anxious nurses, or the bowed forms of bereaved relatives and friends.

They retire to their various homes, and here let us leave our gay friends to such quiet and peace as their consciences and spirits will allow.

The husband arrived in New Orleans on the day following that of the drive to the Lake, which has just been described. He hastened to meet his beautiful wife, from whom he had been separated for some months. On arriving at the boarding house where she resided, he was shocked to find the establishment nearly deserted. He asked a servant where all the people were. “They are nearly all dead, but Mrs. —, and she has just been seized with the fever,” was the reply. “Great God!” exclaimed the alarmed husband; and rushing up stairs, entered his wife’s room. It was too true. There she was—the bright, blooming, and joyous belle of the last night’s frolic, stretched on her couch by the remorseless enemy of whose power she had but a few hours before spoken so lightly. A physician had just been called in. He had examined her case, and prescribed for her.

“What chance is there for her?” feebly gasped out the miserable husband.

“She is naturally a good subject,” was the slow and measured reply of the learned professor; “but she has been taking the very course to bring on the fever, and render it incurable. She rode to the Lake last evening, and indulged in eating and drinking, and other excitements, which render a patient very unmanageable.”

“Horrible! awful!” exclaimed the poor husband. “Oh! why did you—” but as he turned and caught a view of the agonized and sallow

countenance of his stricken wife, he could not finish the reproachful interrogatory.

Kindly and tenderly he attended her couch. Toward noon, the paroxysm passed off; her strong constitution seemed to triumph over the disease; the fever had abated, her whole condition was improved, consciousness had returned, and her nurse and physician said she was doing well. Seeing that she was provided with every thing needful, the husband stole out to attend to some business which could not be neglected. Thus he was employed to a late hour in the afternoon. After completing his duties he started homeward. On his way, he met a friend who, remarking upon his pale and exhausted appearance, asked him to join him in a drink in one of our hotels. They walked in and, standing at the bar, were engaged in conversation, chiefly in reference to the supposed convalescent wife of the gentleman, her promising condition, and the prospects of an easy triumph over the fever, when a boy walked up to the husband and asked :

“ Are you Mr. —— !”

“ Yes.”

“ Your wife is dead !”

As if struck by lightning, the poor man fell senseless on the floor. His friend, with the aid of some bystanders, raised him up, and bore him to a cab, in which he was carried to the St. Charles Hotel. Here leaving him, sunk in a stupor of grief and nervous prostration, his friend drove to the boarding house of his wife.

It was too true. The proud, blooming, spirited beauty was now a yellow, spotted corpse. All her charms were gone. The full, round, glowing cheeks, the pouting lips, the soft and dimpled chin, the brilliant eyes, the swelling bosom, were fast sinking into that condition that would secure a rich banquet for the grave-worm.

Quickly follow the preparations for her burial. Two gentlemen, friends of the husband, quietly brought a coffin to her room, and with the aid of a black woman, deposited the corpse in it. A hearse was procured, in which the coffin was placed, and with a single carriage to accompany it, the two gentlemen started for the cemetery, at about ten o'clock at night, in the midst of a violent shower of rain. Arriving at the gate, with the help of a negro man, they removed the coffin from the hearse, and placed it in a vault. At that moment an individual who knew the gentlemen, asked whose coffin was that? He was informed; whereupon he exclaimed—“ Great God ! I saw her on the Shell Road yesterday !” It was then

suggested that a prayer, or some religious ceremonial, should be read for the occasion. Inquiry was made in vain for a prayer book. With a horrid oath, the stranger exclaimed against the barbarity of burying so pretty a woman with no more respect than they would a dog or a horse. The gentlemen got into their carriage, and rode back to the city.

Such was the sudden end and the desolate funeral of her who, but a few hours before, had rode by that gloomy receptacle of the dead, so exultant, so confident; so full of life, of hope, and of joy

The Tableau Vivant.

A merry, jovial party assembled one day at the splendid rooms of Jacobs, the daguerreotypist, in Camp street. The epidemic was not then at its height, and the fear of it had not become so pervading. One of the party, Mr. H——, claimed to be acclimated, and spoke jokingly, like a veteran, of "Yellow Jack." The young man in charge of the establishment, who was in the full bloom and vigor of life, snapped his fingers, in perfect indifference and defiance of the disease. Indeed, he would rather have it than not, as he heard it improved a man's beauty, and he thought he could stand a good deal of reform in that particular. Another, and the oldest and most serious of the party, was Dr. W. K. Northall, an editor of the New Orleans Delta, and well known in New York as a dramatic critic and author. The Doctor regarded the matter more seriously, and rebuked the levity of his young friends. They, in return, taunted him with being scared. Lying on the sofa while his young friends were amusing themselves in talk, the Doctor fell into a gentle slumber. It was then proposed by one of the young men that they should get up a Yellow Fever Tableau, by treating Doctor N. as a patient. Accordingly, one got a basin, into which some ink was poured, to represent black vomit; another took a vial; a third stood at his head, personating the physician, with his hand on the doctor's forehead; and a fourth personated a nurse. A daguerreotype was then taken of the scene, which is now in the city. It is a striking and expressive tableau, and would deceive any one looking at it into the

belief that it was the picture of a real scene. But the events which closely followed this incident are much more real, solemn, and impressive. First, Mr. K——, the young daguerreotypist, was seized by the fever, and, despite his youth, his vigor, and his sanguine courage, was the first victim of the party to the dread destroyer. He was soon followed by another young man, W. H. H——, a native of Virginia, who was so confident of his acclimation; a third was also seized, and narrowly escaped death. And now the last of the party was the gentleman who had personated the patient in the tableau, Dr Northall. For some time the Doctor escaped the disease, though constantly beset with every form of it, and not a little alarmed at its violence. Finally, he yielded to the persuasions of his friends, and left the city, intending to remain at Hollywood—a lovely summer resort on Mobile Bay—until he could feel satisfied that he had escaped the infection. On arriving at Hollywood, he felt for once free, safe, and happy, and wrote as follows to the journal of which he was the associate editor:

“Sick, melancholy, and depressed when we put our foot upon the deck of the good steamboat Oregon, to cross the lake, for Mobile, we scarcely felt that any breeze, however fresh and free from taint, would serve, in a short time, at least, to send the blood coursing through our veins with any thing like a joyous bounding. But in this we were mistaken; for, despite the lurking impression upon us, that the disease which had spared us so long might still lay its heavy hand upon us, we had not been on board the boat two hours before—to use the language of Grace—we felt “renewed” and “born again.” How much does the disposition and character of the mind depend upon the condition of the body! We are more mere machines than our pride is willing to admit.”

That letter came by the mail. The lightning caught up with it. The evening edition of the same journal announced, by telegraph, the intelligence of the death, by the black vomit, of the writer of these hopeful words! And so fared the *tableau vivant*. The sole survivor, the most delicate and feeble of the party, having barely escaped after a violent illness, retains the picture as a mournful memento of the uncertainty of life, and of the vanity of those who would seek to defy and mock a pestilence which, like a tornado, levels the proudest and sturdiest, even when it spares the delicate, the weak, and the timid.

The Musicians' Last Meeting.

One gloomy Saturday evening in August there met in the music store of Mr. Ashbrand, in Camp street, several gentlemen who were all leading musical characters in the city, and were also warm and devoted friends, whom congenial tastes and old national attachments frequently brought together. These gentlemen were, Mr. Hyer, a member of the Philharmonic Society; Mr. Adolphe Zunn, formerly director of the orchestra of the St. Charles Theatre; and Mr. Theodore La Hache, a musical composer of considerable celebrity. After interchanging the usual civilities, it was proposed that Mr. Hyer should sing Keller's "Blind Man," while Mr. Zunn accompanied on the piano. This song was executed in very beautiful style by Mr. H. It closes with these words—

"And in the grave there is rest;"

Mr. Zunn, repeating the words as he gave the last thrum to the piano, added: "Yes, two hundred and eighty-eight have this day found that rest."

It was then proposed by Mr. Ashbrand that Mr. Hyer should sing the "Last Rose of Summer." "With all my heart," replied Mr. H. "Would that the last rose of summer had faded and gone, and with it the last case of fever!"

At this moment they were joined by two other musical friends, in the stout and healthy persons of Mr. Yonspelius, a member of the Philharmonic Society, and Professor de Martellini, an accomplished musical scholar and performer, late of Baltimore. The party now included the very choicest musical spirits and most accomplished artists of a very musical city. They were all young men, under thirty, in the full vigor of health, and were models of temperance, regularity, and propriety of life and habits. A lively conversation on their favorite art now arose, and was kept up with the usual spirit and vivacity of devotees: Professor Martellini at last suggested that Mr. Yonspelius should sing the "Elf-king," by Schubert, which was done in beautiful style. At the conclusion, Mr. La Hache, taking up the words of the song, remarked: "Yes, the Elf-king is among us!"

"Ay, ay," added Professor Martellini:

"The father doubled the speed of his steed,
But when he arrived at his castle-door,
The child was no more."

"But," continued the Professor, "next Monday, I will get out of the reach of the Elf-king, mounted on a steed that travels faster than the horse."

"Come, come, Martellini," remarked Mr. Ashbrand, a young man of about twenty-five, "away with these gloomy ideas. Let us cheer our spirits and defy the pestilence with some sweet strains of divine music. Give us your variations on 'Woodman, spare that tree.'"

The Professor cheerfully complied, and performed his composition most exquisitely. At the close of it, Ashbrand, turning to La Hache, remarked—

"Martellini has promised to write out his variations next week, and I shall send them to Firth, Pond & Co., for publication."

Dwelling upon the words of the song, and ever recurring to the prevailing topic, one of the company remarked—

"This is an appropriate song in these times, when so many stately trees are so rapidly hewn down, and when so few are spared."

"Yes," said Yonspelius, himself a very large and athletic young man; "but it would require a very sharp axe and stalwart arm to level such a heavy trunk as the Professor there."

"Oh, no," replied Ashbrand, a small and delicate man; "it is said the yellow fever is severer upon large men. The taller they are the greater and more sudden the fall. Hence, if we should both be seized with it, I should certainly stand the best chance, being but half the size of Martellini."

But this continued recurrence to the gloomy subject having rendered the friends somewhat moody and silent, they concluded to break up and return to their several homes. It was their last meeting. In ten days thereafter, Mr. La Hache was the only one left of the party. Thus music lost, in this brief period, four of its most gifted and devoted votaries.

A startling incident marked the dying moments of one of these gentlemen. We refer to Mr. Yonspelius. For some time before death came to his relief he was in a raving delirium; in which his ruling passion displayed itself, in several attempts to sing his favorite songs. Being a very robust and powerful man, he tore himself from his nurses and from the ligatures with which it was found necessary to restrain him; and rushing into the middle of the room, he assumed the attitude suited to the character; and, in a full and powerful voice, sang the beautiful solo of Edgardo, in Lucia di Lammermoor, when in the grave-yard he thus apostrophises his beloved:

"Tu che a Dio, O bell' alma inamorata!"

Before he had completed the air, the black vomit gathered in his throat, and ejecting a large quantity of it, he fell upon the floor, and died in a few minutes.

The Little Coffin Bearers.

On my way back to my office, one evening in August, after a very fatiguing and distressing day's attendance upon the sick and dying, I met near the corner of Royal and St. Anne streets, a little girl and boy, mere children, not more than ten or twelve years of age, each with a small coffin on their heads, which they carried as we frequently see negroes carry heavy loads, so nicely poised as hardly to need a hand to steady them. The coffins were very rough, just daubed over with lamp-black; the clothing of the children was dirty and ragged, the feet were bare, and their whole condition indicated extreme destitution and suffering. Surprised at this spectacle, I stopped the boy and asked him why he carried the coffin. His story was a brief one—the common story of the day—two of his little brothers had died of the yellow fever, his father and mother were both sick with it, and having no one to help them, the little children had been sent off to the undertakers to buy two coffins, and were going home to put their little brothers into them, and prepare them for the corporation dead carts! Too poor to hire the attendance of an undertaker, or even a wagon to take the coffins home, they were bearing them along the streets themselves, melancholy emblems of the condition of the unfortunate family at home. So young and so terribly afflicted! It was enough to make one's heart bleed to look at them—and as the little girl, with the ugly black coffin upon her head, raised her great black, sunken, wondering eyes to mine, I could scarcely restrain my tears; and I can assure the reader, that no scene during the whole epidemic impressed me so deeply, or will live so long in my memory as that of the little Coffin Bearers in Royal street.





Families Swept Off.

It would be vain to attempt to enumerate the instances of whole families swept off by the epidemic. The advocates of contagion will find strong arguments to sustain their view of the disease, of its communicability by contact, in examples of the most melancholy character, where, in the course of a few days, a large tenement, which but a short time before had been full of vivacity and gayety, was converted into a Golgotha or cemetery, with every member of the family dying or dead. Frequently, even in families of means, three or four corpses would be exposed in one room. There would be the mother and the father lying on one bed, and the infant between them or at their feet. In one room the undertaker might be seen screwing down the coffin, while the heavy breathing of another member of the family, in his or her dying agonies could be heard from an adjoining room, and the raving of a third in the delirium of fever from another apartment. The burial of mother and infant in the same coffin was a very ordinary incident. The newspapers, though but few of the victims obtained even the small space allotted to obituary notices, contained melancholy records of this destruction of whole families.

In the *Picayune* of August 23, we find the following recorded, among the deaths by yellow fever:

“Josephine Wolff, the 2d inst., aged 69 years.

“Solomon Wolff, her husband, 9th inst., aged 68 years.

“Hana Wolff, daughter, 9th inst., aged 22 years.

“Sara Wolff, daughter, 11th inst., aged 24 years.

“Montez Wolff, grandchild, 13th inst., aged 9 years.”

Thus was a whole family, and a happy one, cut down in the course of nine days!

The *Delta* of the 4th September has the following:

“On the 13th August, Sarah E., second daughter of John B. and Sarah Groves.

“On the 18th August, Ellen, youngest daughter of John B. and Sarah Groves.

“On the 23d August, Frances B., eldest daughter of John B. and Sarah Groves.

“On the 28th August, Mary T., third daughter of John B. and Sarah Groves.

"On the 1st inst., of the prevailing epidemic, John B. Groves, merchant of this city, formerly of Columbia, Tennessee."

Four beautiful, blooming daughters rapidly follow one another, and are borne to the grave by a fond, devoted parent—a gentleman of high standing and wealth, and an old merchant of this city. Finally the father completes the sorrowful record, and joins his beloved children in the mansions of the blessed.

A most affecting incident was that of a young merchant, who, having succeeded in business, married a young and beautiful girl, and established himself in a pleasant cottage in the suburbs to pass his honeymoon. The new married couple took but one servant, an Irish girl. We need not say how cheerful and happy they were in their pleasant little villa—with its patch of shrubbery and young magnolias in front, and cool, airy rooms, and gallery in which they could walk of afternoons, and chat so pleasantly and enjoy the evening air. For some weeks nothing disturbed their happiness. Biddy, the servant, was a good, faithful, hard-working girl, and the young couple had little to do but to enjoy one another's society. They had lived some years in the city, believed they were acclimated, and besides were too happy to be disturbed by the gloomy stories which began to appear in the newspapers about the ravages of the yellow fever. At last came their first care. Biddy had a fever. There was no tea and toast—no one to sweep the rooms, or cook the little breakfast and dinner. Alas! Biddy grew worse and worse, and even the doctor could do her no good, and she died in a few days. Another girl was hired in place of Biddy. She shared the same fate, dying in a few days. Another was obtained, and she too followed her predecessors. Frightened by this terrible mortality, the young husband determined to fly the fatal house. He therefore hurried with his bride to Mobile. She was seized with the fever, and died in that city. The afflicted husband returned to the city, with a view of disposing of his property, and proceeding to some distant country, where he would be out of view of a place so suggestive of sorrow. On his arrival in New Orleans, he was seized with the fever, and died. A friend, the only one who attended his corpse to the grave, went up to the former happy residence of his departed friend and his lovely bride. There he found the scene of so much pure happiness a few weeks ago, now one of gloomy desolation and solitude. There was but one living creature in the house. It was a solitary parrot, swinging mournfully in its cage, and bemoaning its desolate fate. Alas! poor Poll!

Marriage and Death.

When the fever was at its height, and the whole city was sunk in grief and mourning, a smiling happy couple appeared one morning before the Rev. Mr. De La Croix, of the Catholic Church, and requested him to proclaim the banns of their marriage the next day. The reverend priest was surprised that any person should desire to get married at such a time of general misery and distress; and urged the couple that they should postpone it until the epidemic was over. But they declined doing so, and the priest, indignant at what he considered ill-timed levity, turned away, and positively refused to officiate in their behalf, stating that he was too busy attending the sick and administering the last consolations to the dying. The impatient pair next proceeded to the Rev. J. J. Mullen, Rector of St. Patrick's, who exhibited a like surprise at the urgency of the parties, and at first refused to sanction such a marriage, but at last yielded to their importunities. After due publication of the banns they were married, and retired to their new home to spend the honeymoon.

In a few days, the bridal chamber presented a solemn and affecting spectacle. The dead body of the husband lay on a couch, and the bride writhed in the agony of a violent fever on the bed; she quickly followed him, and their honeymoon was passed in another world.

The Nervous Literateurs.

Two literary gentlemen, who were connected with the press of the city, and who had been educated as physicians, were in the habit, whenever they met, of joking one another about their appearance; their alarm for the fever, and their chance of getting and escaping it.

One day they met in one of our hotels, when the following conversation took place:

Dr. N——. "Why W——, you look very bad—your skin is yellow, your eyes bloodshot."

Dr. W——. "Oh, you are joking. None of that on so serious a subject." (Looking very nervous and alarmed.)

Dr. N——. "I never was more serious in my life."

Dr. W——. "I was just about to say the same of you—you have a very pale, nervous, alarmed look. Let me see your tongue—very bad—you would make a very bad case—black vomit in thirty-six hours."

Dr. N——. (Looking nervous and frightened—in an irritable manner, replied)—"Black vomit—you look as if you had it already, for with all your efforts to keep it in, it is oozing out at the corners of your mouth." (Dr. W—— chewed tobacco.)

Dr. W——. (Spitting out the quid and looking highly excited.) "What do you mean, N——! Do you desire to kill me?"

Dr. N——. "What do you mean? Have you not already threatened and endangered my life by your absurd joking?"

From this the two friends got to using the words "murderer," "assassin," &c., until some friends were compelled to interfere to restore their usual pleasant relations; which was, however, finally completed over a bowl of punch.

The next day this little occurrence was noted by one of the daily papers. The writer little thought that in a few days thereafter he would be called on to chronicle the death of both gentlemen, who, at last, yielding to their apprehensions fled the city, but bore with them the infection which developed itself some days after they had left, and snatched from a circle of devoted friends and relatives two most estimable gentlemen, who had already acquired enviable positions in the world of letters.

The Good Clergyman.

As a general rule, the clergy of this city remained true and faithful during the scourge. On this score, the Protestant ministers have been severely censured for their derelictions heretofore; but it must be admitted that they fairly redeemed their characters during the present epi-

demic. It is true their labors were not so severe as those of the Catholics; but still there was enough for all to do—and they courageously performed their tasks, not only in ministering in their proper sphere, but also in acting as nurses and physicians. Though it may appear invidious to select particular individuals from a class in which, as far as we could learn, there were no delinquents, yet the case of the Rev. Mr. Whitall, of the Bethel in this city, a Protestant Episcopal clergyman, whose province is to preach to the seamen of our city, and to labor for the improvement and reform of that class of our population, is so remarkable, that we can not refrain from referring to it. The labors of Mr. Whitall in aiding the sick, in hunting up the poor and procuring proper comforts and attendance for them; in nursing and taking care of the orphans of the plague, were almost incredible. We regret that the compass of our article forbids our following him even through one day of his labors. A single instance may illustrate the practical character of his benevolence. Walking on the levee in pursuit of objects of charity, one day at noon, he was attracted to a number of laborers collected around some object. Elbowing his way through the crowd, Mr. Whitall found a poor laborer lying on the ground in a violent fever, exposed to the sun, and suffering very much. The crowd, though pitying his condition, appeared to be either too much frightened to render him any aid, or ignorant of how they could relieve him. But the experienced Samaritan did not long consider his duty on such an occasion. Seizing one of the wheelbarrows used in carrying bales of cotton from the wharves to the ships, he rolled it up alongside the sick man, and laying him gently in it, wheeled his poor patient to the nearest hospital, and there secured him proper attendance. The good clergyman received his reward in the consciousness of a noble action, and in the heartfelt gratitude of the poor laborer, who recovered, and is now pursuing his duties on the levee.

Night Burials on the Mississippi.

During the height of the epidemic great numbers of persons attempted to escape from the city, on boats going up the Mississippi, which were often over-crowded with passengers, many of them in advanced stages of the disease, vainly hoping to reach their friends in the upper country ere death should ensue. The boats usually leave late in the evening, and frequently at midnight they were compelled to make a landing to bury the dead on the banks of the river, often half a dozen bodies at a time. The scene exhibited at these night burials was fearfully wild and exciting. The bodies were taken on shore in such boxes as could be found to serve the purpose of coffins, and were hastily deposited in the earth by the deck hands, with rarely any stick, stone, or other monument to mark their resting place, or any inscription to indicate the names of the unfortunate persons who occupied these lonely graves. The utmost terror pervaded all hearts. The bravest men quailed before the awful dangers which surrounded them; and as the light of the blazing torches fell upon their haggard faces, it seemed only to reveal to the spectator a crowd of death-stricken people waiting their turn for a place in the cold bosom of the earth. As soon as passengers died, it was the custom on many boats to clear their berths and state rooms of the beds and bedding, and throw them into the river. The floating mattresses were frequently picked up by settlers along the river, and were the means, it was supposed, of carrying the seeds of infection to many an isolated plantation which might otherwise have escaped the disease. This however, is a disputed point, it being doubted by many whether the fever is thus transmissible. I witnessed several of these midnight burials, and must confess that I was impressed with a sickening sense of horror, such as no other incident of the epidemic excited in my mind. On one occasion, a gentleman from the north, who stood near me on the guards of the steamer, while the bodies were being buried, declared that if he felt conscious that he was seriously affected by the fever, he would rather take a plunge into the dark, deep, eddying river, and end his existence at once, rather than wait for such a death and such a burial, the idea of it was so appalling. I had a similar feeling myself, accustomed as I was to the horrors of the epidemic; and I would not have ventured upon the boats at all, (which I considered mere floating charnel houses,) if calls of affection, as strong as the love of life itself, had not compelled me to do so.



NIGHT BURIAL ON THE MISSISSIPPI.

The Dead Mother.

One of the most remarkable instances of the intense affection which sometimes exists between mother and son, was exhibited in the case of George L——, of New York, and his widowed mother. Both of them were seized with the symptoms of yellow fever, and each tried to conceal the fact from the other. The young man was taken first: the mother was taken soon after, and was the first to die. I saw the son a few hours before his death, when he was evidently in the last stages of the disease, and heard the description of his mother's death, in the most passionate language, from his own lips. He had no idea that he was likely to die, and I did not think it best to alarm him.

"Oh! Doctor!" he exclaimed, rising in his bed, while he ejected the black vomit freely and easily at intervals of a few minutes, "Oh! Doctor! it seems so strange to me that my mother died! I did not even know that she was sick till a few hours before her death. I had been ill myself for several days; but as soon as I saw that my mother was affected with symptoms of the fever, I pretended that I was well, and endeavored to induce her to lie down and permit me to act as nurse. She refused, and denied that she was seriously ill. I laid down upon the bed, and fell asleep. My mother was sitting up in the easy chair. It was then near midnight. About half-past two I awoke from mere anxiety, and looking up discovered my mother still sitting in her chair—but oh, how changed! The horrible evidences of yellow fever were stamped upon every lineament of her face! She looked as if she saw the grave and pondered upon its hideous contents. I sprang from the bed, and placed my mother upon it. She was fearfully ill, and too feeble to resist. All that night and the next day I tended her and nursed her, with the fever still burning in my veins, and often, I have no doubt, with fierce delirium in my brain; but there was no alternative. Nurse after nurse disappointed us, and to let my dear mother die for want of attention—she who had done so much for me in days and years that had past—it was impossible. The next night—last night—as you know, Doctor, she died. She had her senses to the last, and knew she should die. She called to me, and said so gently, 'I am dying;' is it not horrible, this fatal fever. I put hot water to her feet with my hands, hotter than the hottest water itself, almost broiling! as they are now! But it was of no service—she died. I could not believe it, her death was so easy. I put a glass to her lips, but there was no stain

on its polished surface, and then I was compelled to believe it. From that hour, Doctor, I have been steeped, as it were, in horror. I do not think I am very sick, Doctor, but the mental agony I feel is awful. I never thought my mother could die! I never thought such an event possible. And she is gone! Oh! I could not believe she was dead. I listened if she breathed—I rubbed her arms and hands, and looked into her bright eyes—so bright, even after death—and the body warm, yes hot—hot for a long time! Doctor, do you really think she was dead? Have you never known yellow fever patients to fall into a trance, and thus be buried alive? I think I have heard such stories of the plague—hav’nt you, Doctor?”

I tried to satisfy him that his suspicions, which seemed to give him much pain, must be groundless; but no reasoning afforded any peace or consolation to his mind.

“Oh, Doctor,” he continued, “I know I have a stronger constitution than my poor mother, and may recover from this disease; but oh! I am sick and weary of the world, and do not care to recover, now that my mother is gone. She was almost my only friend, or near relation, for whom I felt any regard, and I do not care to live. Oh! Doctor, no words can tell my deep regard for my poor mother. Last night, when I stretched myself upon her coffin for the last time, and lay long and mute, musing on every action of her hard, devoted life, I prayed to God that I might not survive her!”

That prayer was heard and answered. I left the young man almost frantic with excitement and fever, and in four hours afterwards I saw his coffin placed on a hearse and heard the wheels roll off, over the pavement, towards the tomb of his much-loved mother!

Ludicrous Side of the Epidemic.

As there is but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous, so there will always be a ludicrous side to the most melancholy and distressing events of life. In the very height of the epidemic, there were not wanting people who spoke lightly of the whole affair, and turned the exaggera-

ted reports which were in circulation into ridicule. There certainly was a great deal of monstrous exaggeration in some of the reports which were sent abroad by telegraph, and otherwise; the reality was bad enough without such additions as were made.

But as an off-set to these exaggerations, you would hear men gravely telling people the fever was so bad at the St. Charles Hotel, that as soon as a man arrived and registered his name they immediately took his measure for a coffin, and asked him to note down in which cemetery he desired to be interred!

Also, that as soon as a man arrived on one of the steamboats, the officers of the Board of Health immediately took his name and entered it in their books as *deceased*, to save all trouble in calling upon him again!

One day, going by a store in Chartres street, where they sell canaries and pet animals, I saw a crowd of young men laughing and shouting, and on stepping into the store found that they were assembled about a monkey which was evidently in great distress. I was informed that the keeper of the store had fed the monkey with some putrid pork, which had been elevated in the air upon a kite, until it was covered with animalculæ. Some thought the monkey was mocking sickness, and his motions excited much merriment. To my practised eye, having seen so much of the epidemic, the scene was anything but ludicrous; I perceived at once that the poor animal was really sick, and indeed it was not long before all were convinced of the fact, as he soon began to throw up the most unmistakable black vomit, and finally died, while the fun of the bystanders was suddenly changed to fear and shuddering!

Missing Pages

100-101

Missing Pages

100-101

THE HOWARD ASSOCIATION.

OFFICERS.

V. BOULLEMET, *President.*D. I. RICARDO, *Secretary.*G. KURSHEEDT, *Treasurer.*

FINANCE COMMITTEE.

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H. W. PALFREY,

J. O. HARRIS.

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W. W. VAUGHT,
R. B. LUSK,
A. MOYNAN,

B. O'CONNELL.

The HOWARD ASSOCIATION of New Orleans was organized by a number of noble-hearted young men during the epidemic of 1837, for the purpose of relieving the sick and destitute by some systematic effort. The Society was highly successful in its labors, and immediately won the confidence of the community both at home and abroad. The number of members was at first about one hundred and fifty; but in 1842 a charter was obtained from the Legislature of Louisiana limiting the number of members to thirty, with power to add to their number temporary assistants during the prevalence of epidemics, if necessary. The charter is a perpetual one. No member of the Association receives any pay for his services; it is entirely a voluntary and charitable body.

When no epidemic prevails, the members of course attend to their ordinary business pursuits; but so much business has grown up under the operations of the Association that it is necessary to employ some persons to attend to the calls of the public at all times. The organization is such that in one hour after meeting, if an epidemic is found to exist, the entire city can be supplied with physicians, hospitals, nurses, apothecaries, and all the means of relieving the sick and poor, which it is possible for money and human skill and kindness to afford.



VICTOR BOULLEMET.

President of the Howard Association, New Orleans.



FREDERICK DOUGLASS
1845. LITHO. BY J. H. BROWN.

It is a remarkable fact that since the year 1837, the Howard Association has not lost a single member from yellow fever, although they have often been employed night and day attending the sick and dying, in every kind of weather, and in the most filthy localities and hovels, where this dread disease existed in its most fatal forms.

The members of the Association have generally been young and active men. Virgil Boullemet, the President of the Association, is a native of New Orleans, and was born in 1820, and is therefore only about thirty-four years of age. His father was a native of France. Mr. Boullemet was one of the original founders of the Howard Association, being then only about seventeen years of age. During the epidemic of 1853, he was elected a member of the Board of Health, and chairman of its most important committees.

The portrait of Mr. Boullemet, which we insert in this work, is copied from a steel engraving published in the New Orleans Directory for 1854, and is a faithful likeness of this distinguished philanthropist.

We cordially unite with the general expression of praise which has been bestowed upon the members of the Howard Association for their faithful and self-sacrificing labors in the cause of humanity; and we rejoice to say, that while their fame has extended throughout the country and the world, it is at home, where they are best known, and most closely observed, that their character and services are most highly esteemed and admired.

D. I. RICARDO, Esq., the Secretary of the Association, deserves particular and honorable mention, for the uniform courtesy and kindness which he has extended to all who have called upon him for information in relation to the Society, and when we consider the number of such visits which he receives, and the multiplicity of vexatious demands which are made upon his time and attention, it is no slight testimonial in his favor to say that he fills this arduous office to the entire satisfaction of the public. We feel under special obligations to Mr. Ricardo for the aid which he afforded us in the preparation of this little work.

REPORT

OF THE

HOWARD ASSOCIATION.

EPIDEMIC OF 1853.

NEW ORLEANS, Jan. 1 1854.

The following exhibits the transaction of this Association during the late epidemic of Yellow Fever in this city, as reported by the Executive officers, who were specially appointed to prepare the same; and which having been adopted was ordered to be published.

CASES OF YELLOW FEVER.

| NATIVES OF— | |
|---------------------------------|---------------|
| Ireland, | 5,845 |
| England, | 198 |
| Scotland, | 56 |
| Wales, | 7 |
| Germany, | 2,890 |
| Switzerland, | 35 |
| Italy and Tyrol, | 80 |
| Spain, | 39 |
| Portugal, | 2 |
| France, | 436 |
| Savoy, | 6 |
| Corsica, | 1 |
| Greek Isles, | 6 |
| Jerusalem, | 1 |
| Sweden, | 28 |
| Norway, | 19 |
| Denmark, | 14 |
| Belgium, | 8 |
| Holland, | 5 |
| Poland, | 11 |
| Mexico, | 14 |
| West Indies, | 3 |
| St. Domingo, | 2 |
| Canada, | 21 |
| North Scotia and New Brunswick, | 9 |
| Greenland, | 1 |
| United States, | 716 |
| Unknown, | 635 |
| Total, | 11,088 |

| | |
|------------------------|-------|
| Males, | 5,203 |
| Females, | 5,885 |
| Adults, | 9,415 |
| Under 16 years of age, | 1,673 |
| Died, | 2,942 |
| Discharged, cured, | 8,146 |

CONTRIBUTIONS.

| A. | |
|---|----------|
| Armstrong, George, Wheeling, Va., | \$ 10.00 |
| Archer, James, Jefferson county, Miss., through Richard Beck, | 100.00 |
| Athinson, J. C., Memphis, Tenn., through James Robb & Co., | 50.00 |
| Allison, New Orleans, | 100.00 |
| Alter, Charles E., New Orleans. | 50.00 |
| Albany, N. Y., citizens of, through D. H. Carey, | 1,545.25 |
| Angusta, Ga., citizens of, through Hon. A. D. Crossman, Mayor, | 500.00 |
| Alexandria, Va., citizens of, through the same, | 235.25 |
| Albany, N. Y., citizens of, through D. W. C. Rice, | 5.00 |
| Allen, R. F., White Sulphur Springs, Va., through W. E. Starke, | 100.00 |
| Alamo, Lodge of F. & A. M., San Antonio, Texas, through A. Lockwood, | 50.00 |

